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Promotion of multilateralism in the area of disarmament and non-proliferation

Report of the Secretary-General

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I. Introduction

1. The General Assembly, in its resolution 71/61 on the promotion of multilateralism in the area of disarmament and non-proliferation, requested the Secretary-General to seek the views of Member States on the issue of the promotion of multilateralism in the area of disarmament and non-proliferation and to submit a report thereon to the Assembly at its seventy-second session.

2. Pursuant to that request, on 21 February 2017 a note verbale was sent to Member States inviting them to provide information on the subject, followed by a second note verbale dated 12 June 2017. The replies received are contained in section II below. Additional replies received after 31 July 2017 will be posted on the website of the Office for Disarmament Affairs[1] in the language of submission.

II. Replies received from Governments

Argentina

[Original: Spanish]
[13 July 2017]

Argentina will spare no effort in working constructively and promoting the broadest possible consensus in order to achieve the ultimate goal of a world free of nuclear weapons. This is a priority goal of the country's foreign policy, grounded in its historic position in support of general and complete disarmament, in accordance with article VI of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons.

Argentina will continue to participate in all multilateral discussions, forums and negotiations pertaining to this goal with a view to eliminating nuclear weapons throughout the world in an irreversible, transparent and verifiable manner, and in the conviction that the Non-Proliferation Treaty is the cornerstone of the international legal framework for non-proliferation and nuclear disarmament.

Brunei Darussalam

[Original: English]
[29 June 2017]

Being a small nation, Brunei Darussalam recognizes the importance of multilateralism to advocate its interests. Brunei Darussalam does not possess nuclear weapons and has no intention of producing or acquiring nuclear weapons or other weapons of mass destruction, hence it is in Brunei Darussalam's interest to ensure that no such weapons exist and proliferate. In order to do this, Brunei Darussalam engages others to cooperate in order to hamper such threats.

On that note, Brunei Darussalam is an active proponent of supporting the various multilateral efforts in disarmament and non-proliferation. Brunei Darussalam is a signatory to most, if not all, the major regional and global instruments pertaining to disarmament and non-proliferation.

As the country focuses its efforts on ensuring transparency and confidence-building, it continues to call upon others to support such commitments. At the same time, Brunei Darussalam aligns itself to the Association of Southeast Asian Nations unequivocal support for nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation efforts at the regional and global levels.

[1] www.un.org/disarmament/.

Brunei Darussalam consistently supports the issues pertaining to the development of regional and international mechanisms to encourage disarmament and prevent the proliferation of arms ranging from small arms and light weapons to weapons of mass destruction. In addition, Brunei Darussalam is a signatory to various chemical, biological and nuclear weapons conventions, in particular the Treaty on the South-East Asia Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone.

Colombia

[Original: Spanish]
[28 April 2017]

Colombia recognizes the importance of multilateralism in the area of disarmament and has worked to achieve consensus in the relevant multilateral forums, in order to advance towards the objectives that inspired the establishment of the United Nations, and which honour its purposes and principles.

Colombia has emphasized, in different forums, the importance of legal instruments and international institutions, reiterating the need to universalize the non-proliferation and disarmament regime, and highlighting the importance of these issues for international peace and security.

Colombia participates in the international forums on matters of global interest, such as the Conference on Disarmament and the Disarmament Commission, where it has highlighted the importance of building synergies and establishing complementary processes to bring together the existing institutional framework and the new discussions on this subject that have been developing.

For Colombia, it is vital that the international regime for disarmament, non-proliferation and arms control is continuously strengthened, and for this reason Colombia is a party, or is in the process of becoming a party, to the main international instruments dedicated to that end.

Cuba

[Original: Spanish]
[6 March 2017]

Multilateral negotiations that are open to all States on an equal footing guarantee and facilitate universality, as well as the commitment of States to the agreements, measures and instruments related to disarmament and non-proliferation.

The challenges of the current international environment reinforce the need for multilateralism. Existing disputes within the international system and the threats that may arise in the area of disarmament and non-proliferation must be resolved peacefully. Multilateral efforts must be renewed to break the impasse in the negotiations on the disarmament machinery, which has lasted for several years owing to the lack of political will on the part of certain countries.

The Movement of Non-Aligned Countries, of which Cuba is a member, has reiterated that multilateralism is absolutely valid in the area of disarmament and non-proliferation, and has restated its determination to promote multilateralism as a core principle that should underpin negotiations on these matters, including on priority issues such as nuclear disarmament.

The goal of disarmament and arms control cannot be achieved through unilateral measures. Experience has shown that some States use alleged threats to national security to justify their promotion and implementation of unilateral

measures that jeopardize international peace and security, undermine multilateralism and multilateral agreements, and erode confidence in the international system and in the foundations of the United Nations itself.

As a State Member of the United Nations and a State party to numerous treaties on disarmament and non-proliferation, Cuba reaffirms its commitment to the promotion, preservation and strengthening of multilateralism.

Seeking agreements through multilateral negotiations is essential if collective solutions are to be adopted, and if the only effective long-term means of safeguarding international peace and security is to be found.

Ecuador

[Original: Spanish]
[31 July 2017]

Ecuador is particularly pleased that the Open-ended Working Group on the fourth special session of the General assembly devoted to disarmament was able to agree by consensus, in June 2017, on the recommendations relating to the objectives and agenda of that session, which clearly indicates that multilateralism can and should be the fundamental principle underpinning disarmament work. It also expresses its satisfaction that, in April 2017, after almost two decades of no agreement, the Disarmament Commission managed to agree on recommendations concerning one of the items on its agenda: confidence-building measures in the field of conventional weapons.

Ecuador considers that these actions and others taken by the General Assembly are very positive as they have reaffirmed, in an international environment marked by the unilateral actions of certain countries, the need to promote multilateralism as the principle mechanism for guaranteeing world peace and security.

As a defender and promoter of international law and the peaceful settlement of disputes, Ecuador supports all actions designed to prevent conflict and also supports the international instruments that will bring about the total elimination of weapons of mass destruction. Moreover, it is opposed to an arms race in outer space.

Ecuador believes that international meetings and summits on issues of universal concern, such as those related to nuclear security, should be open to all States on an equal footing, in line with the principle of multilateralism in the area of disarmament and non-proliferation.

Iraq

[Original: Arabic]
[10 April 2017]

Iraq supports multilateralism as the core principle for addressing disarmament and non-proliferation concerns and considers it to be an effective tool for achieving that aim. Disarmament and non-proliferation cannot be achieved in isolation. In terms of scope, unilateral measures and bilateral and regional agreements on disarmament and non-proliferation are no substitute for agreements concluded through multilateral negotiations. To that end, all States must make a concerted effort to respond to potential threats in the area of disarmament and non-proliferation, particularly with regard to weapons of mass destruction. The Government of Iraq is firmly committed to the conventions, treaties and resolutions concerning disarmament and non-proliferation because it believes that the universality of the international conventions on the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction

should be achieved and that compliance with those conventions should be enforced in a non-discriminatory manner. The total elimination of such weapons is a pillar of global peace and stability and will provide the international community with a genuine guarantee that the use or threat of use of weapons of mass destruction will be contained.

The adoption by the General Assembly of resolutions on the promotion of multilateralism in the area of disarmament and non-proliferation is an important step towards strengthening joint international action to unify disarmament and non-proliferation efforts. It is all the more important because the challenges facing the world require collective and effective measures to address threats to international peace and security, particularly given the spread of terrorist organizations and the fear that such organizations might gain access to materials that are used in the manufacture of weapons of mass destruction.

The views of the Government of Iraq on the core issues related to multilateralism in the area of disarmament and non-proliferation can be summarized as follows:

- Nuclear disarmament should remain a top priority for the Conference on Disarmament. Any effort on the part of or negotiations between nuclear-weapon States aimed at bringing about a meaningful reduction in nuclear weapons that leads to a nuclear-weapon-free world should be encouraged, as should efforts to conclude a legally binding international instrument under which nuclear-weapon States provide non-nuclear-weapon States with unconditional assurances against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons. The means of making progress towards that goal should be specified.
- Actions and measures to achieve the universality of the international conventions and treaties on disarmament and non-proliferation should be supported and fostered, as should the multilateral approach that underlies the endeavours of international organizations to exhort all States to accede to the relevant international conventions and treaties and implement Security Council resolution 1540 (2004), as doing so would help prevent the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and control the materials utilized in their manufacture.
- An international commitment must be made to pursue negotiations leading to the eradication and non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction under strict and effective international control of the materials utilized in their manufacture.

Madagascar

[Original: French]
[7 July 2017]

The United Nations has emphasized the following points:

– It is important to preserve the existing agreements on arms regulation, which constitute an expression of the results of international cooperation and multilateral negotiations in response to challenges relating to international security;

– Multilateralism is the core principle in resolving disarmament and non-proliferation concerns.

Consideration of the international agreements and treaties already in force, such as the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, could be a starting

point for the implementation of General Assembly resolution 71/61. Member States should renew their commitments to multilateral international cooperation.

All Member States should again be invited to participate in multilateral negotiations on this subject in a non-discriminatory and transparent manner. The negotiations should lead to the adoption of a convention that is accepted by all and addresses all aspects of disarmament and non-proliferation. Madagascar would participate actively in the negotiations.

Mexico

[Original: Spanish]
[31 May 2017]

Mexico is a recognized and strong advocate of multilateralism. Mexico believes, in line with its foreign policy, that only through multilateral approaches and solutions is it possible to reach agreements and forge strategies to address the challenges in areas as diverse as international security, development policy, climate change, human rights and the progressive development of international law.

Consistent with its beliefs, Mexico advocates the building of a more peaceful and safer world, based on international law, cooperation and friendly relations among States, and the peaceful settlement of disputes, and not on the false stability that conventional and nuclear stockpiles offer, according to outdated views held by some.

The promotion of multilateralism in the area of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation has been one of the priorities of Mexican foreign policy since the very inception of the United Nations. Mexico is a country long known for its activism to achieve the total elimination of nuclear weapons. Mexico is aware of the devastating short- and long-term effects of a nuclear detonation on the population and the environment at the regional and global level.

Therefore, in accordance with the constitutional principles governing the conduct of its foreign policy and the 2014-2018 National Security Programme, published in the Official Gazette on 30 April 2014, Mexico will continue actively and decisively to promote initiatives in multilateral forums with a view to eliminating and prohibiting nuclear weapons, in order to maintain and sustain a world free of this scourge.

Accordingly, on various occasions in the past year, Mexico, along with other States, has promoted multilateral actions to bolster disarmament and non-proliferation, thus confirming the country's conviction that multilateralism is the way to foster cooperation and friendly relations among States and thereby to strengthen international peace and security.

The action taken by Mexico includes the following:

- In 2017, Mexico participated in the session of the Disarmament Commission which, after more than two decades with no agreement, brought forth a document containing recommendations on confidence-building measures in the field of conventional weapons. It also participates in the sessions of the Conference on Disarmament, where the prevailing deadlock is expected to be broken soon.
- Mexico strongly promotes the full implementation and universality of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons and on Their Destruction, because this key multilateral and legally binding instrument

contributes to the common goal of creating a peaceful and more secure world for present and future generations.

- Mexico participates actively in meetings of governmental experts and meetings of States parties, promoting cooperation and assistance among parties to build and strengthen national capacities and promote the sharing of knowledge, experience and scientific and technological progress, particularly among countries with different levels of development, to address and prevent outbreaks of infectious diseases, and to address possible attacks with biological agents.

- In this context, on 15 April 2017, on a voluntary basis Mexico submitted its national report on confidence-building measures for 2016, which is publicly available.

- At the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW), Mexico has reaffirmed its strong commitment to the prohibition of the development, production and stockpiling and to the total elimination of chemical weapons. In addition, Mexico has reaffirmed its full commitment to cooperate fully to achieve effective multilateralism that will strengthen and contribute to the timely implementation of the Chemical Weapons Convention.

In 2016, Mexico engaged in multilateral efforts to further promote the complete destruction and the non-proliferation of chemical weapons, emphasizing in this regard the following:

(a) Mexico first assumed the chair of the twentieth session of the Conference of the States Parties to the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on Their Destruction, held in November 2015, and passed the office to Germany during the twenty-first session of the Conference, held in November 2016.

(b) As a member of the OPCW Executive Council in the period covered by this report, Mexico participated actively in the eighty-second (July 2016), eighty-third (October 2016) and eighty-fourth (March 2017) sessions, and the fifty-second (July 2016) and fifty-third (April 2017) meetings of the Council, taking part in the various debates and votes related to the use of chemical weapons in the Syrian Arab Republic and the alleged use of a nerve agent at the international airport in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, among other topics.

(c) Similarly, it monitors progress in the destruction of the remnants of the declared chemical stockpiles of Iraq, Libya, the Russian Federation and the United States of America.

(d) Mexico participates constructively in the various informal consultation meetings of OPCW working groups and others, in order to contribute and provide timely follow-up to the implementation of the Chemical Weapons Convention. These include the Open-Ended Working Group on Future Priorities and the Open-Ended Working Group on Terrorism, as well as the Sub-Working Group on Non-State Actors, which discuss key aspects of the challenges and opportunities for the Organization in preparation for the fourth review conference to be held in 2018.

(e) To support the implementation of the Convention on Chemical Weapons, Mexico hosted the subregional exercise on response to incidents involving chemical warfare agents and toxic industrial chemicals, held in May 2016 in the city of Guadalajara, and is preparing to host a regional tabletop exercise for Latin America and the Caribbean on response to chemical emergencies, to be held in November 2017 in Mexico City.

(f) Mexican officials from various Government and academic institutions have also participated in various courses, workshops, conferences and meetings convened by OPCW. A Mexican professor, Benjamín Ruiz Loyola, is one of the 15 members of the recently established OPCW Advisory Board on Education and Outreach.

(g) Mexico frequently makes voluntary contributions to the OPCW Voluntary Fund for Assistance, to support implementation of article X of the Convention on Chemical Weapons on assistance and protection against chemical weapons, as one of the 14 countries in the Latin American and Caribbean region that has adopted legislation to comply with all the initial implementation measures set out in article VII of the Convention.

(h) In response to the chemical weapon incident that occurred on 4 April 2017 in the town of Khan Shaykhun in Idlib Governorate, in the Syrian Arab Republic, the Government of Mexico categorically and strongly condemned the use of chemical weapons, by any actor and under any circumstances, reiterating that their use is a flagrant violation of human rights, international law and international humanitarian law, as well as a war crime and an unacceptable act that threatens international peace and security. Mexico reiterated that position days later in a joint communiqué issued together with other Latin American countries to express deep concern over the escalating violence in Syria and to condemn in the strongest terms the inhumane use of chemical weapons against the civilian population.

- Mexico participates actively and constructively in the various multilateral and regional forums that deal with the issue of nuclear disarmament. In the context of the meetings of the First Committee, during the seventy-first session of the General Assembly, held from 30 September to 2 November 2016, in its national capacity or endorsed by other countries, Mexico submitted, as a co-author or main sponsor, the following resolutions on disarmament:

(a) Resolution 71/27. Treaty for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean (Treaty of Tlatelolco).

(b) Resolution 71/46. Humanitarian consequences of nuclear weapons.

(c) Resolution 71/47. Humanitarian pledge for the prohibition and elimination of nuclear weapons.

(d) Resolution 71/50. The Arms Trade Treaty.

(e) Resolution 71/54. Towards a nuclear-weapon-free world: accelerating the implementation of nuclear disarmament commitments.

(f) Resolution 71/55. Ethical imperatives for a nuclear-weapon-free world.

(g) Resolution 71/57. United Nations study on disarmament and non-proliferation education.

(h) Resolution 71/67. Nuclear disarmament verification.

(i) Resolution 71/74. United Nations Disarmament Information Programme.

(j) Resolution 71/86. Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty.

(k) Resolution 71/258. Taking forward multilateral nuclear disarmament negotiations.

Of particular note is resolution 71/258, adopted with 113 votes in favour, 35 against and 13 abstentions, in which the General Assembly, implementing the recommendations of the Open-ended Working Group which met during 2016 in

Geneva, decided to convene a conference to negotiate a legally binding instrument to prohibit nuclear weapons, leading towards their total elimination.

Mexico participated in the first session of the Conference, which was held from 27 to 31 March 2017 in New York, fully convinced of the importance of achieving a ban on nuclear weapons after 21 years of stalemate in the Conference on Disarmament, during which negotiations to prohibit and eliminate nuclear weapons became deadlocked.

For Mexico, in the light of the purposes of the United Nations under Article 1 of its Charter, the negotiation of a treaty banning nuclear weapons is essential and is consistent with the obligation contained in article VI of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, thereby contributing to its implementation.

Mexico believes that a legally binding instrument banning nuclear weapons will not replace the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. The timely implementation of both instruments shall be without prejudice to the framework of the other treaty; both instruments will be complementary, thus strengthening the non-proliferation and nuclear disarmament regime.

Mexico believes the legally binding instrument to be negotiated must meet three clear objectives:

(1) The negotiation process must be expeditious and simple. We will give preference to any initiative leading to this goal and to avoid interfering with or generating distraction from the processes that also complement the non-proliferation and nuclear disarmament regime.

(2) The text of the treaty must be brief and clear, aimed at a central purpose: the prohibition of the use, acquisition, stockpiling, development, transfer or stationing or deployment of nuclear weapons, as well as the involvement and assistance of its States parties, or inducement to participate, in any activity prohibited by the treaty.

(3) The treaty must be inclusive and open to all States. The treaty must be open to both States parties and not party to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, as well as to nuclear weapon States and States under the nuclear umbrella.

These considerations will guide Mexico in its participation of the second session of the negotiating Conference, which will take place from 15 June to 7 July 2017 in New York.

- In parallel, Mexico participated in the first preparatory committee for the 2020 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, which was held in Vienna, from 2 to 12 May.

Mexico hopes that during the meetings of the preparatory committees that mark the start of the new review cycle of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, documents will be produced that could serve as a basis for the final document of the 2020 review conference. Mexico will also make every effort to ensure that there is a balance in the treatment given to the three pillars of the Treaty and that the process is transparent and inclusive.

- Mexico staunchly promotes the entry into force and universality of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty. Consequently, it has participated in the meetings of the Preparatory Commission for the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization.

In that connection, together with Australia and New Zealand, and as it has done every year, Mexico introduced a draft resolution entitled "Comprehensive

Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty", which was adopted by a vote at the seventy-first session of the General Assembly.

Moreover, Mexico has emphasized the need for all States to refrain from carrying out nuclear weapon tests, other nuclear explosions or any other related non-explosive test, including subcritical experiments and those carried out using supercomputers to improve nuclear weapons, in order to avoid violating the spirit of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty.

- In addition, Mexico promotes the objectives of non-proliferation through its active participation in the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), both in the General Conference and the Board of Governors. It has served as an observer on the Board since September 2016.

With financial funds, contributions in kind, human resources, experience and best practices, Mexico strongly supports the consolidation and universality of the safeguards system of the Agency, with which it signed an additional protocol that entered into force in 2011. It also supports efforts to strengthen the effectiveness and improve the efficiency of safeguards and the verification of facilities and nuclear and radioactive materials through better integrated verification activities, continuously updated technologies and better and more extensive analysis of information from a variety of sources.

In the area of nuclear security, Mexico complies with the IAEA safety standards and the Agency's guidelines and recommendations in the field of security. Mexico also contributes to the expansion and deepening of such provisions through the ongoing participation of experts at meetings and publications of the relevant special committees.

Mexico actively participated in the IAEA Ministerial Conference held in Vienna in December 2016.

Mexico continues to train technical staff in nuclear security with IAEA support, through its support for the implementation of such international agreements as the Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material and its amendment, and the development of guidelines and advisory services for member States. In this connection, Mexico believes it is important to implement a comprehensive and holistic approach to the international nuclear security regime to cover nuclear material and facilities for both civilian and military purposes.

Similarly, as a contributor to the IAEA international database on the illicit trafficking in nuclear materials, Mexico cooperates fully with IAEA in the application of safeguards in its territory and maintains strict control over radioactive sources in the country.

- Mexico participates in the New Agenda Coalition; the Non-Proliferation and Disarmament Initiative and the International Partnership for Nuclear Disarmament Verification.

- Mexico also participated in the four Nuclear Security Summits held in Washington, D.C. (2010), Seoul (2012), The Hague, (Netherlands) (2014) and Washington, D.C. (2016), and is a member of the related Nuclear Security Contact Group established pursuant to the joint statement on sustaining action to strengthen global nuclear security submitted by the United States during the fourth Summit, the aim of which is to analyse and promote issues relating to nuclear security. In addition, Mexico participated in the preparations for the international conference to conduct a review of the progress made in the area of clearance, dilution, production and storage of highly enriched uranium, emanating from the joint statement on minimizing and eliminating the use of

highly enriched uranium, submitted by Norway, which requests States to submit a voluntary report and includes the commitment to hold an international conference to measure progress made on highly enriched uranium, scheduled for June 2018.

- Mexico attaches great importance to the strengthening of the regime established by Security Council resolution 1540 (2004) as well as its effective implementation. In that regard, Mexico has worked with a number of countries to support the implementation of that resolution in the region and participates in cooperation mechanisms involving both the public and private sectors such as the Wiesbaden process, for which Mexico will host a regional meeting in June 2017.

- Other actions undertaken by Mexico to promote multilateralism in disarmament and non-proliferation include its participation in the tenth anniversary of the Global Initiative to Combat Nuclear Terrorism in June 2016, and the third meeting of the Working Group on Chemical Safety of the Global Partnership Against the Spread of Weapons and Materials of Mass Destruction in November 2016, both held in The Hague (Netherlands).

Portugal

[Original: English]
[27 July 2017]

Portugal believes that multilateralism is the most efficient way to attain the objective of peace and security maintenance at the international level, through disarmament and non-proliferation. On this issue, Portugal is party to the relevant treaties and other international and regional mechanisms regarding the prevention and elimination of threats represented by the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, including nuclear weapons. Portugal also cooperates with international organizations that work in those areas.

Portugal is party to the following instruments and mechanisms: the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons and on Their Destruction, the Protocol for the Prohibition of the Use in War of Asphyxiating, Poisonous or Other Gases and of Bacteriological Methods of Warfare, the Convention on Prohibitions or Restrictions on the Use of Certain Conventional Weapons Which May Be Deemed to Be Excessively Injurious or to Have Indiscriminate Effects, and its Protocols (including amendments), the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on Their Destruction, the Convention on Cluster Munitions, the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and on their Destruction, the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty, the Convention on Nuclear Safety, the Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material and its amendment.

Portugal also participates in the following export control regimes: the Missile Technology Control Regime, the Australia Group, the Nuclear Suppliers Group, the Zangger Committee and the Wassenaar Arrangement on Export Controls for Conventional Arms and Dual-Use Goods and Technologies.

Portugal has participated in outreach activities that aim to promote the universalization of the main treaties and other legal instruments regarding disarmament and non-proliferation, especially with the Portuguese-speaking

countries, through formal and informal contacts and initiatives such as seminars, workshops and meetings.

Following the efforts in the area of disarmament, at a multilateral level, Portugal was one of the first 50 States to ratify the Arms Trade Treaty, which is the first legal instrument on the matter of disarmament adopted by the United Nations in the past decade.

Concerning nuclear disarmament, Portugal recognizes the risk represented by countries that possess and seek to develop nuclear weapons, especially in regions that are politically and socially unstable, which represent a higher threat potential.

With reference to nuclear disarmament, Portugal defends the full implementation of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, always considering the importance of the existence of confidence-building measures among nuclear and non-nuclear States.

Portugal also hopes that the Conference on Disarmament will adopt, as soon as possible, a programme of work supporting the negotiation of the treaty banning the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices. To that end, Portugal highlights the importance of the implementation of the 2010 Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons action plan, in the area of disarmament and non-proliferation, as well as the peaceful uses of nuclear energy, and believes that the effective implementation of that action plan includes ending the stalemate of the Conference on Disarmament. Portugal also signed and ratified the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty, and has proceeded with outreach activities regarding its universalization.

Qatar

[Original: Arabic]
[31 May 2017]

- Qatar is firmly committed to promoting multilateralism in the area of disarmament and non-proliferation, and considers it an important negotiating tool in achieving a range of goals. Qatar is a party to all the relevant conventions, namely the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on their Destruction, the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons and on Their Destruction, and the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty, and is an active participant in the Conference on Disarmament and the pertinent seminars and meetings. It is also one of those members of the Non-Aligned Movement that are parties to the Non-Proliferation Treaty. Qatar stresses that complete and comprehensive disarmament and non-proliferation are vital and inextricably linked.

- Qatar believes that it is very important to make progress towards universal, multilateral, non-discriminatory and transparent arms control, non-proliferation and disarmament, with the aim of achieving comprehensive and complete disarmament under strict international supervision, thereby according international legitimacy to the relevant negotiations.

- Qatar calls for the development of disarmament and non-proliferation strategies and hopes that the 2020 Review Conference of the Parties to the Non-Proliferation Treaty will be successful. It also calls for the prompt entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty.

- Qatar emphasizes the need to promote the Conference on Disarmament as the sole multilateral disarmament negotiating forum.

Spain

[Original: Spanish]
[26 May 2017]

The twenty-first century has changed the collective perception of international security and its concept. The confluence of new actors, challenges and threats that exacerbate the uncertainty and complexity of our times has made security one of the priorities of the international community.

The European Union global strategy for foreign and security policy of 2016 identifies the fight against proliferation as being among its areas for regional cooperation in the Mediterranean, the Near East, the African continent and Latin America and the Caribbean. Similarly, the strategy reflects a concern for and an interest in advancing non-proliferation on the Korean peninsula.

The National Security Strategy to counter the threat posed by the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction establishes strategic approaches including effective multilateralism and active cooperation, particularly with States members of the European Union, allies in the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and partners in the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE).

The National Defence Directive defines the current strategic landscape as being characterized by the presence of a hybrid threat combining conventional conflict with asymmetrical confrontations fostered by the existence of areas that are beyond the control of territorially sovereign States.

Cyberattacks, the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, the spread of armed or unarmed fanatical movements and groups, migrant and refugee flows, illegal trafficking in persons and the rise of radicalism are all emerging realities that require multilateral responses, political will and concerted action to contribute to outcomes conducive to peace and international stability.

In a globalized and interdependent world, security is a value and aspiration of States, institutions, regions, communities and, above all, of citizens. The lack of security in our times is ascribable not only to aggressor States but also to non-State actors, terrorists and other criminal organizations. The deterioration in security hampers the development of nations and peoples because violence denies people the right to progress. Security is essential for the exercise of freedom and for the advancement of human rights and democratic values.

In the area of proliferation, one of the main problems is precisely the existence of different treaties, agreements and control regimes and the need to coordinate actions and criteria, even though it is not always easy to do so. Although in principle all like-minded countries are parties to those treaties, agreements and regimes, and efforts to combat proliferation are an immediate and ever more important goal of the international community, the fact that not all States are parties to all of them, and that the criteria for admission and participation vary from one State to the next, creates problems that are sometimes difficult to resolve.

To this must be added the growing role of non-State actors that are causing instability in many of the countries to the south and east of the Mediterranean. These actors are not subject to the above-mentioned arms control regimes. To counter the growing threat they represent, an indispensable tool is non-proliferation, especially with regard to small arms and light weapons as well as weapons of mass destruction. In that regard, it should be noted that Security Council resolution 1540 (2004) and its

comprehensive review process, led by Spain during its presidency of the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1540 (2004), led to the adoption of Security Council resolution 2325 (2016), which strengthens the ability of the international community to address the threat of terrorists and other groups using weapons of mass destruction. This resolution reaffirms the need to continue strengthening cooperation between Governments and organizations to counter terrorist groups through increased information sharing, coordination and technical assistance. The relationship between the Security Council and international, regional and subregional organizations, and their coordination through the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1540 (2004), is thus closer.

The rapid development of new technologies and their widespread use entail a new paradigm in the area of non-proliferation and make it more complex as in the case, for example, of controls on intangible transfers of information and knowledge. This also applies to the development of new weapons systems such as remote weapons systems, of particular concern from a humanitarian perspective. To this end, States should multilaterally identify and take the measures needed to maintain effective controls on access to weapons and the related technologies, as well as to continue to guarantee compliance with the principles of the law of armed conflict when such weapons are used.

These observations lead us to the questions of how these challenges should be addressed, and what the necessary and most effective ways to address them are. A multidisciplinary strategy that encompasses the fields of intergovernmental cooperation, the development of joint monitoring and tracking tools, the exchange of information and the establishment of new controls or the revision of existing ones will undoubtedly be required. The scope of the strategy encompasses national defences, strengthened multilateral instruments and organizations, cooperation for development, the eradication of illicit trafficking, as well as a range of other issues.

We must provide effective solutions to combat international security risks. The most appropriate road map is a political and diplomatic agreement reflected in legally binding conventions on disarmament and arms control.

Spain is committed to the multilateral non-proliferation and disarmament system. It has signed all the international agreements that make up the legal and regulatory framework of the system, and maintains an active, ambitious and ongoing policy of defending their effectiveness, with the clear objective of ensuring that the major treaties have a universal scope. Similarly, Spain promotes the universality and full implementation of Security Council resolution 1540 (2004).

Furthermore, Spain is highly involved in the promotion of peace processes and in revitalizing and bringing innovation to the multilateral system with a view to transforming it into an instrument for peace, stability, advancement and progress. This requires arms reduction and control, the promotion of support for the non-proliferation of weapons, and disarmament, as well as efforts to combat the inequalities of globalization, since this is the only way to come close to achieving the dream of a peace that ranges from security and intercultural coexistence to the balanced and sustainable development of the planet.

Accordingly, Spain is contributing to the effective implementation of treaties and conventions, mainly through the international and regional organizations to which it belongs, such as the United Nations, the European Union or OSCE, through a comprehensive contribution in the political, economic and technical spheres.

The existence of an effective multilateral disarmament and non-proliferation system based on effective compliance is key to the implementation of the obligations imposed on States. This multilateral approach not only increases the system's effectiveness, it gives it important legitimacy.

There is a need to strengthen the effectiveness of the international system through more cohesive instruments, greater political commitment and further legally binding agreements, thus maintaining the credibility of the system and preventing a weakening of the system by avoiding the emergence of initiatives with objectives that overlap with those of existing treaties and conventions, whose achievements are evident. Regulations should require the fulfilment of the obligations assumed by States and foster rigorous and transparent verification systems accepted by all States. The capacity for consensus should also be expanded in order to establish legal frameworks that lead to real progress in the areas of peace, security, cooperation and global progress.

As a global and European actor, Spain is strongly committed to reforming multilateralism, meaning that we should be more involved in updating international relations as well as their mechanisms and institutions.

A responsible non-proliferation and disarmament policy requires the promotion of an effective multilateral system by:

- Promoting the universalization, defence and strengthening of treaties, conventions, agreements and international regimes, while avoiding parallel initiatives that are independent of their review processes, since they would weaken those processes and call their effectiveness into question.
- Seeking comprehensive political solutions that prevent, deter or stop the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction or conventional weapons.
- Integrating policy on non-proliferation and disarmament into general security policy.
- Considering the possibility of including "non-proliferation clauses" in bilateral and regional relations.
- Strengthening the role of the Security Council.
- Promoting the national implementation of international obligations.
- Improving the effectiveness of verification mechanisms through political, economic and technical support.
- Strengthening import and export control systems relating to defence and dual-use materials, as well as enlarging their membership.
- Strengthening control measures for intangible transfers of technology.
- Promoting international information exchange.
- Strengthening technical assistance among States and cooperation for development.
- Promoting legal and responsible trade in defence materials and dual-use technologies, and preventing illicit trafficking.
- Facilitating collaboration among Government agencies, non-governmental organizations and industries that share the same objective.

Only an effective multilateral system can successfully tackle the threat to international peace and security posed by the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, in combination with other phenomena such as international terrorism, transnational organized crime, failed States and regional conflicts.

The election of Spain as a non-permanent member of the Security Council, the principal organ entrusted under the Charter of the United Nations with primary responsibility for maintaining international peace and security, reflects the international community's recognition of the important role Spain plays in the world

and the country's commitment to multilateralism and to the purposes and principles of the United Nations.

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Agriculture development, food security and nutrition

Report of the Secretary-General

Summary

The world is not on track to eradicate hunger and malnutrition by 2030. Scarce and unsustainably managed natural resources, combined with insecure and uneven tenure rights for smallholders, are severely affecting vulnerable populations in rural areas. Climate change, drought, political instability and conflict are threats to food security in many places and prevent progress in implementing the Sustainable Development Goals. Countries in protracted crises are at risk of being left behind. A more comprehensive and coordinated response by the international community is needed to link short-term responses to humanitarian crises with longer-term development efforts that address the underlying causes of food insecurity and malnutrition, build resilient and sustainable livelihoods and support sustainable food systems through inclusive policy processes and effective partnerships.

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I. Introduction

1. In its resolution 71/245 on agriculture development, food security and nutrition, the General Assembly requested the Secretary-General to report to the Assembly at its seventy-second session on the implementation of the resolution and called upon the relevant organizations of the United Nations system, within their respective mandates and resources, to ensure that no country is left behind in the implementation of the resolution.

2. The adoption of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (see General Assembly resolution 70/1) heralded a transformation in how national Governments, institutions and stakeholders work together as they reorganize their thinking to implement the Sustainable Development Goals. An increased understanding of the interlinkages among all the Goals was evident during the review of progress towards Sustainable Development Goal 2 (End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture) at the high-level political forum on sustainable development convened in 2017, which was informed by a number of significant preparatory processes and coordinated inputs undertaken by various bodies and multiple stakeholders.

3. In providing information and updates on global efforts to achieve the internationally agreed goals on agriculture development, food security and nutrition, in alignment with the Sustainable Development Goals, the present report draws from the inputs to the high-level political forum and other sources, including contributions from the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the World Food Programme (WFP), the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) and the secretariat of the Committee on World Food Security, with additional collaboration from the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, the United Nations Capital Development Fund, the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women), the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS, the United Nations Industrial Development Organization, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, the International Labour Organization, the International Organization for Migration, the High-level Task Force on Global Food and Nutrition Security, the World Bank, the International Telecommunication Union, the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, the World Health Organization (WHO), the regional commissions and the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the Secretariat.

II. Overview

4. Efforts to end hunger and malnutrition must be accelerated. By the current trends, the world is not on track to eradicate hunger and malnutrition by 2030. An estimated 793 million people lack access to adequate amounts of dietary energy[1] and 156 million children are stunted.[2] Other forms of malnutrition are also rising:

[1] Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) and World Food Programme (WFP), *Monitoring Food Security and Nutrition in Support of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development: Taking stock and looking ahead* (Rome, 2016).

[2] United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), World Health Organization (WHO) and World Bank, "Levels and trends in child malnutrition: joint child malnutrition estimates", September 2016.

2 billion people are deficient in key vitamins and minerals, and 1.9 billion adults and 43 million children worldwide are overweight or obese.[3]

5. The number of hungry and food-insecure people in countries affected by conflict and crises has increased dramatically, from almost 80 million in 2015 to 108 million in 2016.[4] In recent months, severe food insecurity as a result of different combinations of environmental stressors, conflict, displacement and competition over scarce natural resources has affected millions of people. This constitutes a major humanitarian challenge confronting the international community that requires urgent attention.

6. The current pace and scope of implementation is unlikely to promote the transformational change needed to realize the objectives of Sustainable Development Goal 2, and its targets will not be achieved in many parts of the world. Large segments of the world's population, particularly in sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia, will remain undernourished or malnourished by 2030 and even by 2050. According to the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, if current trends continue, it is estimated that an additional 1-3 billion people will be affected by water scarcity and 200-600 million people will suffer from hunger by 2080, particularly in sub-Saharan African countries. WHO reports that climate change is also expected to cause approximately 250,000 additional deaths each year from malnutrition, malaria, diarrhoea and heat stress between 2030 and 2050 and to result in 24 million additional malnourished children.[5]

7. More coordinated efforts are needed to meet the immediate needs of people affected by major food crises, which are often fuelled by conflict, high food prices and abnormal weather patterns caused by the El Niño phenomenon, through targeted emergency responses as well as medium- and longer-term assistance to support recovery and build resilience.

8. Hunger and poverty must be addressed simultaneously by raising incomes and productivity, securing smallholders' tenure rights over productive resources, especially for women and youth, creating decent employment, ensuring adequate social protection and enhancing the functioning of markets. Interventions should be increased in rural areas, where the majority of the extreme poor and chronically food insecure live.

9. Progress towards sustainable agriculture is also slow and uneven. Small-scale food producers play a critical role in catalysing rural transformation that ensures sustainable livelihoods, particularly in countries where smallholder agriculture is the main provider of food and employment. Increased investments are needed to enhance capacity for agricultural productivity. Progress on mobilizing means of implementation for Sustainable Development Goal 2 and related provisions in the Addis Ababa Action Agenda, especially on investment in sustainable and inclusive agriculture to reduce poverty and food insecurity, remains insufficient and needs to be urgently addressed.

10. Sustainable Development Goal 2 highlights the complex interlinkages among food security, nutrition, rural transformation and sustainable agriculture. The Goal links the eradication of hunger and malnutrition to a transformation in agriculture and food systems and to the empowerment of rural people, women and men alike, as critical agents of change. The creation of more sustainable food systems must be at the centre of efforts to eradicate poverty and promote prosperity. While agriculture

[3] UNICEF, WHO and World Bank, "Levels and trends in child malnutrition: joint child malnutrition estimates", 2012.

[4] Food Security Information Network, "Global report on food crises, 2017", March 2017.

[5] WHO, "Climate change and health fact sheet", July 2017.

plays a direct role in eradicating hunger and extreme poverty, it is also central to achieving targets of the Goals relating to health, water, biodiversity, sustainable cities, sustainable energy, oceans and climate change.

11. The inextricable link between Goal 2 and other Sustainable Development Goals presents numerous challenges at the national level. Many countries are following diverse pathways to achieve Goal 2, establishing national platforms for developing more integrated policies and programmes and fostering knowledge-sharing and productive partnerships. Effective use of inclusive multi-stakeholder platforms and partnerships can support holistic, well-balanced approaches to achieving Goal 2 and its related targets. Encouraging policy developments were seen at the global level in 2017 in the context of the Group of 20, the Group of Seven and the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, which should be further built upon.

III. Ending hunger and ensuring access to food

12. With regard to target 2.1 of the Sustainable Development Goals, great progress in poverty and hunger reduction over the past few decades in many parts of the world notwithstanding, poverty, hunger and malnutrition still remain major obstacles to sustainable development. The number of hungry and food-insecure people in countries affected by conflict and crises increased dramatically in 2016 to 108 million people, from around 80 million in 2015. In recent months, severe food insecurity as a result of different combinations of environmental stressors, conflict, displacement and competition over scarce natural resources has affected nearly 20 million people; high risk of famine is currently observed in north-east Nigeria, Somalia, South Sudan and Yemen.[6] This constitutes a major humanitarian challenge confronting the international community and requires urgent attention.

13. The most recent projections suggest that approximately half of the global poor now live in States characterized by conflict and violence.[7] The eradication of poverty and the promotion of prosperity require a greater focus on those countries, which often face continuous or recurring cycles of disaster, crisis or conflict that pose threats not only to peoples' lives but also to their livelihoods. Yet emergency and relief assistance are often insufficient to break the cycle. Protracted crises call for specially designed and targeted assistance that addresses the immediate need to save lives and alleviate suffering, and also boosts resilience and the capacity to prepare for, absorb and prevent humanitarian disasters, crises and long-term stresses in the future. The particular impact on women and children and the importance of considering gender in responses to crises should be given greater attention, while nutritional needs, given the severity of undernutrition during protracted crises, also require a special focus.

14. A rapid and efficient response to agricultural threats and emergencies saves lives, promotes recovery and reduces the gap between dependency on food assistance and self-reliance. The combination of humanitarian assistance with development actions to protect and restore agriculture-based livelihoods can mitigate and avert the loss of lives resulting from hunger, food insecurity, malnutrition and loss of livelihoods. Building resilience within rural communities and providing support to local food systems are essential to address root causes and prevent additional crises.

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[6] FAO, "World hunger on the rise again, reversing years of progress", 3 July 2017. Available from http://www.fao.org/news/story/en/item/902489/icode/.

[7] FAO and WFP, "Monitoring food security in countries with conflict situations: A joint FAO/WFP update for the United Nations Security Council", July 2016.

15. Populations at risk of famine or facing chronic food insecurity largely depend on agriculture for their survival. As conflict, drought or other natural disasters and economic crises erode their livelihoods, their risk of hunger and need to rely on external assistance rises. In Somalia, for example, almost 90 per cent of people at high risk of famine live in rural areas.

16. The Framework for Action for Food Security and Nutrition in Protracted Crises of the Committee on World Food Security provides guidance to stakeholders on how to improve food security and nutrition in protracted crises while addressing the underlying causes, and represents a global consensus on how to improve the food security and nutrition of populations affected by or at risk of protracted crises, through bridging humanitarian and development assistance. The Framework provides a basis for increasing integrated actions in countries affected by or at risk of protracted crises and guidance on how to build resilience and prevent further crises and resulting impacts on food security and nutrition.

17. FAO, WFP and the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, through the Inter-Agency Standing Committee Emergency Directors Group, are supporting countries to adopt, adapt and replicate the Integrated Food Security Phase Classification to support country-level joint assessments for the humanitarian needs overview, and are participating in a pilot initiative on common donor reporting. The phase classification system provides a set of standardized tools and procedures as a common language for the analysis and classification of the severity and magnitude of food insecurity and malnutrition and informed the famine declaration in South Sudan in February 2017.

18. In Somalia, through the Food Security and Nutrition Analysis Unit, pre-famine warnings were issued in February 2017, prompting a massive international response which has so far prevented the worst-case scenario, while regular updates were provided on the progress of cropping seasons, climate and markets, as well as the evolving food security situation.

19. FAO worked closely with WFP and the European Union to coordinate the compilation of global and regional food security analyses in the "Global report on food crises 2017" through a transparent, consultative and consensus-based process to ensure that appropriate planning and needs-based allocations tackle the consequences of food security crises within an evolving humanitarian financing environment and to provide evidence for informed decision-making.

20. Developing the capacity of national Governments to manage information systems ensures the ownership and adequacy of information for national policymaking. The FAO Global Information and Early Warning System continuously monitors the food security situation in every country and alerts the world to emerging food shortages. In Yemen, FAO is supporting the strengthening of the early warning system, including by enhancing the collection, analysis and management of nutrition and food security data and translating alerts into a swift response to any emerging crisis.

21. The expansion of social protection across the world has been critical for progress towards the international targets on hunger. More than 100 countries now have some form of cash transfer programme that is focused on promoting food security and nutrition, health and education, particularly of children. However, around 70 per cent of people worldwide still lack access to some form of social security.[8] Ensuring access to social protection instruments is critical to provide a minimum income and help people living in poverty transition into jobs and income-

[8] FAO, IFAD and WFP, *The State of Food Insecurity in the World, 2015: Meeting the 2015 international hunger targets — taking stock of uneven progress* (Rome, 2015).

generation opportunities to ensure their participation as partners in development and economic growth.

22. Social protection also improves the use and ownership of productive investments at the household level, leading to increased farm production, food security, local economic growth and rural development, especially when combined with agricultural interventions. In Ethiopia, for example, every $1 transferred through social protection programmes generates up to $2.52 in income for the local economy.[9]

23. Countries are encouraged to promote multisectoral approaches to nutrition and food security by aligning social protection, nutrition and nutrition-sensitive agricultural interventions. This includes designing joint packages of interventions ("cash plus" interventions) that take advantage of the targeting used for social protection programmes, which aim to reach the poorest and most vulnerable, and link beneficiaries with nutrition services while promoting nutrition-sensitive agriculture.

24. Agricultural production and markets must improve access to diversified, nutrient-dense foods. By ensuring that agricultural objectives match food recommendations, such as national food-based dietary guidelines, it will be possible to promote food and dietary diversification and help to close nutrient gaps through agricultural interventions. Simultaneously, nutrition education among actors along the value chain can increase demand for diversified, nutrient-dense foods. Women's empowerment and nutrition education are essential to enhance the capacities of families and communities to better feed themselves. Reviews of nutrition-related outcomes of agricultural development projects consistently underline that the impact on dietary adequacy and child growth depends on whether nutrition education is included in the intervention.

IV. Ending all forms of malnutrition

25. With regard to target 2.2 of the Goals, nutrition challenges are increasingly complex as multiple forms of malnutrition, including stunting, wasting, underweight, micronutrient deficiencies, overweight and obesity, may coexist within the same country or household. One in four children under five years of age is at risk of dying from malnutrition-related diseases. Over 2 billion people lack the vitamins and minerals they need to grow, develop and lead healthy lives.[10]

26. In 2016, the global prevalence of stunting, wasting and overweight among children under the age of five was 22.9 per cent (155 million), 7.7 per cent (52 million) and 6.0 per cent (41 million), respectively. Child malnutrition is most prevalent in South Asia and sub-Saharan Africa, where more than a third of children (36 per cent and 34 per cent, respectively) were stunted in 2016. Although the prevalence rate has declined from 52 per cent and 43 per cent in 2000, South Asia and sub-Saharan Africa still hold the highest child malnutrition rates: 77 per cent of the world's stunted children live in those two regions.[11] More than half of the world's wasted children live in South Asia.[12]

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[9] FAO, *The State of Food and Agriculture: Social protection and agriculture — breaking the cycle of rural poverty* (Rome, 2015).

[10] FAO, IFAD and WFP, *The State of Food Insecurity in the World 2015*.

[11] World Bank, Health, nutrition and population data portal. Available from http://datatopics.worldbank.org/health/sdg-indicators (accessed 8 August 2017).

[12] UNICEF, WHO and World Bank, "Levels and trends in child malnutrition: joint child malnutrition estimates — key findings of the 2017 edition", 2017.

27. Globally, around 1.9 billion adults are overweight, of whom 600 million are obese. This has a high cost in terms of increased prevalence of diet-related non-communicable diseases and the associated health expenditure. It is expected that 11 per cent of children below the age of five will be obese by 2025 if the current trend does not change.

28. Improving rates of breastfeeding could prevent 820,000 child deaths each year and decrease the prevalence of overweight or obesity later in life by 26 per cent. Given that for every $1 spent on nutrition programmes, $16 in benefits are generated, interdisciplinary efforts within food systems to achieve better nutrition present great potential for middle- and low-income countries to avoid following the "well-worn, highly damaging path from undernutrition to obesity" observed in the past.[13]

29. The launch in 2016 of the United Nations Decade of Action on Nutrition (2016-2025), pursuant to General Assembly resolution 70/259, was an important step towards a more clearly defined, time-bound cohesive framework that works within existing structures and available resources to implement the broad commitments made at the Second International Conference on Nutrition, held in 2014, as well as the Sustainable Development Goals. The Decade was proposed as a result of the Second International Conference on Nutrition and its outcomes, the Rome Declaration on Nutrition and the Framework for Action, which set out a common vision for global action to eradicate hunger and end all forms of malnutrition, including undernutrition, micronutrient deficiencies, overweight and obesity.

30. The added value of the United Nations Decade of Action on Nutrition is to establish a focused period to set, track and achieve impact and outcomes and provide an accessible, transparent and global mechanism for tracking progress and ensuring mutual accountability for the commitments made. FAO and WHO co-lead its implementation, in collaboration with WFP, IFAD and UNICEF. The work programme for the Decade was developed through an inclusive and collaborative process using coordination mechanisms such as the Standing Committee on Nutrition and the Committee on World Food Security, in consultation with other international and regional organizations and platforms. National Governments are developing commitments for action in line with the Sustainable Development Goals and various regional strategic frameworks.

31. As part of the Decade, a wide range of organizations and partners are working together through Nutrition for Growth, a global movement to re-energize the political momentum and global focus on nutrition and mobilize new financial and policy commitments. Nutrition for Growth is led by a partnership among the Governments of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, Brazil and Japan and is championed by philanthropic foundations and civil society organizations, including the Nutrition for Growth stakeholders group, the International Coalition for Advocacy on Nutrition and the Scaling Up Nutrition movement. In addition to providing a platform for commitments, Nutrition for Growth enables exchanges and learning on how to address malnutrition more effectively and how to foster a culture of transparency and accountability.

32. The International Year of Pulses (see General Assembly resolution 68/231), in 2016, increased public awareness of the nutritional benefits of pulses, prompted worldwide activities that successfully disseminated knowledge of the benefits of pulses for food and nutrition security, fostered dialogue on the development of

[13] Lawrence Haddad and others, "A new global research agenda for food", *Nature*, vol. 540 (30 November 2016), pp. 30-32.

policies that promote their production, consumption and trade, and promoted sustainable agriculture and food systems.[14]

33. FAO and WHO have promoted policy dialogue among countries and development partners on nutrition and food systems through the International Symposium on Sustainable Food Systems for Healthy Diets and Improved Nutrition, held in Rome on 1 and 2 December 2016, and have developed capacities at the national, regional and global levels for monitoring the implementation of the Framework for Action adopted at the Second International Conference on Nutrition.

34. The establishment of the Pan-African Parliamentary Alliance for Food Security and Nutrition in October 2016 and the launch of the food and nutrition security knowledge-sharing and monitoring platform (developed by the New Partnership for Africa's Development and piloted in the Southern African Development Community region) are examples of partnerships that contribute to the implementation of the Malabo Declaration on Accelerated Agricultural Growth and Transformation for Shared Prosperity and Improved Livelihoods of the African Union, which includes the "commitment to ending hunger in Africa by 2025", in support of ongoing regional and country efforts.

35. In Asia, the implementation of the integrated food security framework and strategic plan of action on food security in the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) region (2015-2020) and the vision and strategic plan for ASEAN cooperation in food, agriculture and forestry (2016-2025), including intercountry policy dialogue on food security and nutrition to eradicate hunger and all forms of malnutrition, is being translated into national zero hunger action plans in Bangladesh, Cambodia, Fiji, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, Myanmar, Nepal, Pakistan, Thailand, Timor-Leste and Viet Nam.

36. The Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (CELAC) adopted a food and nutrition security plan in 2015 with increased attention on links between food security, nutrition, family farming and climate change. In January 2017, CELAC member States approved a gender strategy for the plan.

37. In 2016, the Latin American and Caribbean Parliamentary Front Against Hunger and the Latin American and Caribbean Parliament approved a model law on family farming that focuses on the needs of the most vulnerable and on equitable access to all natural resources and their sustainable use, while respecting and prioritizing the rights of indigenous traditional communities.

38. The forestry sector is an important contributor to food security and nutrition; over 2.4 billion people worldwide depend on forest goods and services for the direct provision of food, fuel, building materials, medicines, employment and income. In a report entitled "Sustainable forestry for food security and nutrition",[15] the High-level Panel of Experts on Food Security and Nutrition of the Committee on World Food Security proposes actions to enhance the benefits of sustainable forestry for improved food security and nutrition.

39. The fisheries and aquaculture sector is also crucial to food and nutrition security, and its importance is growing. The FAO Voluntary Guidelines for Securing Sustainable Small-Scale Fisheries in the Context of Food Security and Poverty Eradication[16] provide concrete guidance.

[14] Materials and activities are available on the website of the International Year of Pulses (www.fao.org/pulses-2016/en/).

[15] Available from www.fao.org/fileadmin/user_upload/hlpe/hlpe_documents/HLPE_Reports/HLPE-Report-11_EN.pdf.

[16] Available from www.fao.org/3/a-i4356e.pdf.

40. In June 2017, the Latin American and Caribbean Parliament created the first model act on small-scale fishing in the world, which will serve as an example for countries to strengthen this key sector for food and nutrition security. The act is a legal frame of reference that countries can use as a basis for developing their own national policies and laws to support millions of people who depend on artisanal fishing as their main livelihood.

41. To address the unique food security and nutrition challenges faced by small island developing States, FAO led the development of the Global Action Programme on Food Security and Nutrition in Small Island Developing States with the Department of Economic and Social Affairs and the Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States in 2017. The Global Action Programme also incorporates the range of priorities identified in the SIDS Accelerated Modalities of Action (SAMOA) Pathway for the conservation, management and sustainable use of oceans and seas and their resources in small island developing States.

V. Doubling the agricultural productivity and incomes of small-scale food producers

42. With regard to target 2.3 of the Goals, transformative change in agrifood systems requires equal consideration for the social, environmental and economic pillars of sustainable development, moving beyond the green revolution to increase production and productivity sustainably for the health and well-being of people without negative social and environmental externalities.

43. Small-scale food producers, including small-scale farmers, artisanal fishers and pastoralists, indigenous people and other key actors across agrifood systems play a critical role in catalysing rural transformations that ensure sustainable livelihoods and human dignity. Smallholder agriculture significantly contributes to the economic sustainability of food systems, being the largest source of investment and economic opportunities in rural areas and the largest provider of employment worldwide.[17]

44. However, many smallholder farmers and their households are themselves poor, food insecure and at risk of malnutrition and have limited access to markets and productive assets and services. They are vulnerable to shocks, and their economic choices are highly constrained.

45. Rural poverty reduction interventions must promote inclusive access to tailored productive technologies and capacity development that enhance the efficiency and productivity of smallholders and family farmers. Solutions lie in public sector investments in infrastructure, better linkages between research, extension and farmers and sound policies to stimulate the adoption of tailored technologies that improve productivity and reduce costs, all of which increase agricultural incomes and yields.

46. The productive capacity of the poorest must be enhanced through integrated approaches such as combining social protection programmes with support for agricultural production; exploring options such as public procurement, farmers markets and different ways to link local production to school meals and other public procurement systems; integrating small-scale producers and family farmers into

[17] Committee on World Food Security High-level Panel of Experts on Food Security and Nutrition, "Investing in smallholder agriculture for food security", June 2013.

value chains; and strengthening producer organizations and cooperatives. Interventions must address potential trade-offs arising from competing interests in available resources, with agricultural expansion responsible for almost 80 per cent of the net forest loss worldwide (more than 5 million hectares each year).[18]

47. Inclusive, efficient and equitable producer organizations and cooperatives are acknowledged as key implementing partners for the Sustainable Development Goals and bring essential and innovative solutions to the challenges of reducing rural poverty, generating employment opportunities and achieving food security. With the vast majority of the world's farms being less than two hectares in size, the potential of family farming can be unlocked through collective action in the form of cooperatives and producer organizations.

48. Women make crucial contributions in agriculture and rural enterprises in all developing country regions as farmers, workers and entrepreneurs. Their roles vary across regions, ranging from paid agricultural work to unpaid labour on family farms and household work. However, many women face persistent gender-specific constraints that reduce their productivity and limit their contributions to agricultural production, economic growth and the well-being of their families, communities and countries. These include limited access to productive resources, extension services and credit, less control over land and lack of secure tenure.

49. The Voluntary Guidelines on the Responsible Governance of Tenure of Land, Fisheries and Forests in the Context of National Food Security, endorsed by the Committee on World Food Security, build on the potential offered by technology and innovation, such as regulated special planning for the sustainable management of land, fisheries and forests. The guidelines support the work of many multilateral organizations worldwide and have given rise to Government-to-Government initiatives through bilateral and South-South cooperation and partnerships between Governments and civil society organizations and among Governments, civil society organizations and private sector companies. Partners are coordinating global and regional initiatives to address land issues, such as the African Land Policy Initiative framework and guidelines on land policy in Africa, and, at the pan-African level, are promoting effective land policies to provide equitable and secure access to land, fisheries and forests in order to accelerate the achievement by countries of the interrelated targets of the 2030 Agenda.

50. Along with the Voluntary Guidelines, the Principles for Responsible Investment in Agriculture and Food Systems of the Committee on World Food Security, which contain recommendations on connecting smallholders to markets and sustainable fisheries and aquaculture for food security and nutrition, are important tools for national policy development.

51. Ensuring more equal access to resources, however, is not enough to achieve gender equality and unleash women's potential to eradicate poverty and hunger. Policies and programmes on agriculture and natural resources need to be gender-aware, and Governments are encouraged to enable women to make their voices heard in decision-making at all levels.

52. Tackling the multiple challenges of producing more food, in terms of quantity, diversity and quality, creating more remunerative work, reducing rural poverty, enhancing food security and nutrition and preserving the natural resource base should consider small family farmers, with a particular focus on women, as key targets in agriculture policies. Yet in many cases agriculture policies do not

[18] FAO, *State of the World's Forests 2016: Forests and agriculture — land-use challenges and opportunities* (Rome, 2016).

differentiate between different types of farmers and, by focusing on production targets, tend to favour larger holdings.

53. Available evidence is limited, and urgent, scaled-up actions are required to characterize small and medium producers. More work is also needed to produce comprehensive data on small-scale food producers' agricultural productivity, livelihoods, market activities and use of natural resources, especially in the poorest areas. Disaggregation by gender should be a priority.

54. The Women's Empowerment in Agriculture Index, developed by Feed the Future,[19] analyses these linkages in an agricultural-specific context and multidimensional manner, focusing on men's and women's decision-making within a household.[20]

VI. Ensuring sustainable food production systems

55. With regard to target 2.4 of the Goals, sustainable food production systems must be at the heart of poverty eradication and the promotion of prosperity. Improving equity and fair access to land tenure is becoming increasingly important in the short and long term, from the local to the national level, to address population growth and increasing pressures on resources and to promote sustainable land-use systems and the efficient use of resources.

56. Growing demand for agricultural products, in particular, animal-sourced foods, is driving major changes in food systems worldwide, with multiple and diverse economic, social and environmental consequences.[21] The livestock sector accounts for around one third of gross world agricultural product. Unsustainable livestock practices are linked to environmental degradation; livestock farming and the feed crop sector are the largest users of land resources and are directly or indirectly responsible for 14.5 per cent of greenhouse gas emissions. Livestock systems can be very vulnerable to climate change and new environment-related emerging diseases; they represent a key area for action to improve resource efficiency, reduce greenhouse gas emissions and adapt to climate change. The Committee on World Food Security policy recommendations, entitled "Sustainable agricultural development for food security and nutrition: what roles for livestock?", provide valuable guidance.

57. Agroecology has proven to be an effective strategy in accommodating both the sociopolitical characteristics of food security and the need to restore ecosystem functions. Agroecology is based on applying ecological concepts and principles to optimize interactions among plants, animals, humans and the environment while taking into consideration the social aspects that need to be addressed for a sustainable and fair food system. By building synergies, agroecology can support food production and food security and nutrition while restoring the ecosystem services and biodiversity that are essential for sustainable agriculture and can play an important role in building resilience and adaptation to climate change.[22]

58. The diversification of production practices — through agroecology, agroforestry, organic farming and integrated landscape management — will be

[19] See www.feedthefuture.gov.

[20] See www.ifpri.org/publication/womens-empowerment-agriculture-index.

[21] Committee on World Food Security High-level Panel of Experts on Food Security and Nutrition, "Sustainable agricultural development for food security and nutrition: what roles for livestock?", July 2016.

[22] FAO, Agroecology knowledge hub. Available from www.fao.org/agroecology/en/ (accessed 16 July 2017).

necessary to sustainably increase productivity, as well as to build resilience to climate change, land and water degradation and pest and disease risks.

59. Strategic investments are promoting the wide adoption of sustainable natural resources and landscape management across the range of production systems and farming typologies. As a result of the Land Degradation Assessment in Drylands project, it is estimated that 33 per cent of land is degraded worldwide. The Land Degradation Neutrality Fund, launched in 2015 under the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in Those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, Particularly in Africa, and other relevant funding mechanisms and development banks are supporting the transition to land degradation neutrality by scaling up and mainstreaming sustainable land management and land rehabilitation. This is essential to improve productivity, natural resource management, biodiversity, ecosystem services, resilience and food security.

60. Country capacities are being strengthened through the African Land Policy Initiative framework and guidelines on land policy in Africa. Programmes such as TerrAfrica and the Great Green Wall for the Sahara and the Sahel Initiative in sub-Saharan Africa demonstrate that knowledge management is critical for the documentation and sharing of successful technologies and approaches. TerrAfrica has been adopted as the preferred database of the secretariat of the Convention to Combat Desertification for reporting on best practices for soil and land management.

61. Global guidelines for the restoration of degraded forests and landscapes in drylands were used to develop action plans in Burkina Faso, the Niger, the Gambia, Ethiopia, Nigeria, Senegal, Fiji and Haiti. Over 3,000 hectares of agro-silvo-pastoral systems were restored across Burkina Faso and the Niger using FAO restoration models involving the use of multipurpose native species selected by communities and "Vallerani" water harvesting systems[23] dug by local communities.

62. In the 2015 report entitled *Status of the World's Soil Resources*, 10 main threats to healthy soils were identified (acidification, biodiversity loss, compaction, contamination, erosion, nutrient imbalance, salinization and alkalization, sealing, soil organic carbon loss and waterlogging), and recommendations were provided for reverting trends and addressing the challenges identified.[24]

63. The Global Soil Partnership and its regional soil partnerships are promoting sustainable soil management for food security and nutrition, climate change adaptation and mitigation, the provision of ecosystem services and sustainable development in many countries. The Partnership and the secretariat of the Convention to Combat Desertification both contribute to stronger land governance, which is fundamental to preventing and halting soil degradation and restoring soil functions and ecosystem services.

64. The Voluntary Guidelines for Sustainable Soil Management, developed through an inclusive process within the framework of the Global Soil Partnership, provide policy and technical solutions to address the 10 soil threats through sustainable soil management.[25]

65. FAO and the International Atomic Energy Agency are supporting countries in monitoring the effects of agriculture on soil and water resources by using modern technologies and developing sustainable and efficient land and water management

[23] See http://teca.fao.org/read/8757.

[24] FAO and Intergovernmental Technical Panel on Soils, *Status of the World's Soil Resources* (Rome, FAO, 2015).

[25] See www.fao.org/3/a-bl813e.pdf.

practices that contribute to increasing global agricultural production and food security while conserving natural resources, including reducing soil erosion and water losses and modernizing and optimizing irrigation and water use efficiency.

66. In the Paris Agreement, adopted in 2015, the fundamental priority of safeguarding food security and ending hunger and the particular vulnerabilities of food systems to the impacts of climate change are recognized. Awareness of the role of the agricultural sector in building resilience to climate change is growing. Around 90 per cent of nationally determined contributions now include agriculture; 78 per cent of such contributions are also related to achieving Sustainable Development Goal 2.[26] Eight countries (Kenya, Nepal, the Philippines, Thailand, Uganda, Uruguay, Viet Nam and Zambia) were supported in the implementation of nationally determined contributions through national adaptation plans, nationally appropriate mitigation actions and the monitoring, reporting and verification of greenhouse gas emissions in the agricultural sector.

67. The nationally determined contributions are a first step in a much broader process of rethinking agricultural and rural development under climate change. Meaningful mechanisms, such as national adaptation plans, have been established under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change to underpin concerted actions to address climate change. In the report entitled *The State of Food and Agriculture 2016: Climate Change, Agriculture and Food Security*,[27] policy recommendations are provided and mechanisms are outlined that should be integrated into broader agricultural and food security and nutrition policies. FAO and the United Nations Development Programme have established a joint programme on supporting developing countries to integrate agricultural sectors into national adaptation plans.

68. The rapid growth of cities in developing countries poses many different challenges for future food systems in general, and for food systems for urban areas in particular. It is anticipated that in coming decades, under a business-as-usual scenario, the highest concentration of hunger and poverty will shift from rural to urban areas. Just over half of the current global population live in urban areas. Projections show that urbanization, combined with the overall growth of the world's population, could add another 2.5 billion people to urban populations by 2050. Close to 90 per cent of the increase is expected to be concentrated in Asia and Africa.

69. The role of cities and local governments is key to addressing urban food insecurity. The mainstreaming of food security and nutrition concerns has been seen in the New Urban Agenda, adopted by the United Nations Conference on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development (Habitat III); the follow-up to the Milan Urban Food Policy Pact, including a second mayors' summit held in Rome in October 2016; and awareness-raising on sustainable food systems for urban food security and nutrition. A rapid urban food systems assessment tool has been developed to support multi-stakeholder dialogues and examine rural-urban linkages in collaboration with the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat).

70. The Sustainable Food Systems Programme of FAO and the United Nations Environment Programme is aimed at raising awareness, enabling conditions for the uptake of sustainable practices across food systems, increasing access to actionable information and tools to make food systems more sustainable and building synergies and cooperation to enhance and facilitate the shift to sustainable food systems. It

[26] Rita Strohmaier and others, "The agriculture sectors in the intended nationally determined contributions: analysis", Environment and Natural Resources Management Working Paper, No. 62 (Rome, FAO, 2016). Available from www.fao.org/3/a-i5687e.pdf.

[27] Available from www.fao.org/3/a-i6030e.pdf.

was developed through an inclusive multi-stakeholder process and currently includes more than 70 partners worldwide from different sectors.[28]

VII. Maintaining agricultural genetic diversity and promoting access to and sharing of benefits

71. With regard to target 2.5 of the Goals, increased attention is being paid to indigenous food systems in the context of climate change, climate adaptation and mitigation measures. As highlighted in *The future of food and agriculture: Trends and challenges*,[29] diversifying the food base with nutritionally rich foods is essential. Indigenous food systems can play a crucial role in diversification while providing ecosystem services and effective natural resource management that is beneficial for climate adaptation.

72. In 2016, FAO co-chaired the Inter-Agency Support Group on Indigenous Peoples' Issues, together with IFAD and the International Land Coalition, to identify convergences among the different actions undertaken by the member agencies in relation to the implementation of the system-wide action plan for ensuring a coherent approach to achieving the ends of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and the Sustainable Development Goals. Indigenous peoples, local communities and small-scale farmers are able to improve many ecosystem services and preserve agricultural genetic diversity, thus contributing to a fundamental extent to the environmental sustainability of agricultural systems, by acting as the custodians of local ecologies and land capabilities.

73. In article 9 of the International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture, on farmers' rights,[30] the enormous contribution of small-scale farmers to the development and conservation of crop diversity is recognized and countries are encouraged to take measures to ensure the protection of their traditional knowledge, the right to equitably participate in sharing benefits arising from the utilization of plant genetic resources, the right to participate in national decision-making on matters related to the conservation and sustainable use of plant genetic resources and the right to save, use, exchange and sell farm-saved seed.

74. The creation and dissemination of technologies specifically tailored to small producers and indigenous people take into account their ability to sustain productivity on lands that are often marginal through complex and innovative land management techniques that combine local and traditional knowledge, traditional products and modern technology. Adaptation processes tailored to local conditions and preferences should be reinforced and improved as key factors in securing the conservation of biodiversity, food security and improved nutrition.

75. In the report of the Secretary-General on progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals submitted to the Economic and Social Council (E/2017/66), it was indicated that in 2016, 4.7 million samples of seeds and other plant genetic material for food and agriculture had been preserved in 602 gene banks throughout 82 countries and 14 regional and international centres, a 2 per cent increase since 2014. Animal genetic material had been cryoconserved, but only for 15 per cent of national breed populations, according to information obtained from 128 countries. The stored genetic material was sufficient to reconstitute only 7 per cent of national breed populations should they become extinct. As of February 2017, 20 per cent of local breeds were classified as at risk.

[28] See www.unep.org/10yfp/programmes/sustainable-food-systems-programme.
[29] See www.fao.org/3/a-i6583e.pdf.
[30] See www.fao.org/3/a-i0510e.pdf.

76. The FAO global partnership initiative on the conservation and adaptive management of Globally Important Agricultural Heritage Systems, launched in 2002 at the World Summit on Sustainable Development, held in Johannesburg, South Africa, has contributed to the adoption of policies that integrate agricultural heritage into agricultural development programmes, and promotes the sustainable use of biodiversity and genetic resources for food and agriculture, as well as the protection of traditional knowledge systems and culture. A total of 37 sites in 16 countries have been designated as Globally Important Agricultural Heritage Systems.[31] Training and capacity development have been provided to users in all regions, and international seminars have been organized to discuss and strengthen the Systems.

VIII. Means of implementation

A. Investment

77. With regard to means of implementation target 2.a of the Sustainable Development Goals, evidence shows that investment in agriculture is more effective in reducing poverty than investment in non-agricultural sectors.[32] It is also up to 3.2 times better at reducing poverty in low-income and resource-rich countries.[33] Accelerated growth in the agricultural and rural economies is essential for breaking the vicious cycle of extreme poverty, undernourishment and malnutrition. Economic development and public investment in agriculture are highly correlated.

78. However, in the past 30 years, private and public investments in agriculture and rural areas have remained stagnant or have declined in most developing countries, particularly in sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia, where poverty and hunger are most prevalent. In countries where agricultural capital per worker and public investments in agriculture have stagnated, many are experiencing extreme poverty and hunger. The global agriculture orientation index, defined as agriculture's share of government expenditure divided by the sector's share of gross domestic product, fell from 0.38 in 2001 to 0.24 in 2013 and to 0.21 in 2015.

79. The share of sector-allocable aid allocated to agriculture from member countries of the Development Assistance Committee of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) fell from nearly 20 per cent in the mid-1980s to 7 per cent in the late 1990s, where it remained through 2015. The decline reflects a shift away from aid for financing infrastructure and production towards a greater focus on social sectors (see E/2017/66).

80. The widening gap between the contribution of agriculture to the economy and its share of government expenditures cannot be offset by increasing official development assistance. Although total official flows (official development assistance plus other official flows) to the agriculture sector has substantially increased in both relative and absolute terms between 2006 and 2015, the increase, of $5 billion, cannot offset the decline in national expenditure on agriculture.

81. The international financial institutions, notably global and regional development banks, remain an important source of financing in food and agriculture. In 2014, the top three lenders to the public sector in food and

[31] See www.fao.org/giahs/en/.

[32] Mark Rosegrant and Peter Hazell, *Transforming the Rural Asian Economy: The Unfinished Revolution* (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2001).

[33] Luc Christiaensen, Lionel Demery and Jesper Kuhl, "The (evolving) role of agriculture in poverty reduction: an empirical perspective", United Nations University-World Institute for Development Economics Research working paper No. 2010/36 (Helsinki, 2010).

agriculture were the World Bank (over $3 billion); the Asian Development Bank (around $1.26 billion); and IFAD ($713 million). The International Finance Corporation and the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development are the largest lenders to the private sector; they allocate over $1.3 billion for food and almost $1 billion for agriculture. There are expectations that agricultural lending by the international financial institutions will continue to rise. For instance, the African Development Bank plans to triple its agricultural investment from $700 million to $2.4 billion a year for the next 10 years, starting in 2017.

82. Solutions exist for the progressive development of more sustainable and productive agriculture. Support for smallholder farmers through outreach, technology transfer, infrastructure to build capacities and access to innovative financing are crucial. Research and innovation provide technical ingredients for change and a better understanding of ecosystem functions and services. Technologies and approaches exist for improving soil health and enhancing carbon sequestration, more efficient use of water and energy, efficient food supply chains, the reduction of food loss and waste and the conservation of biodiversity.

83. Across Africa, Asia and Latin America, the Consortium of International Agricultural Research Centers and its partners have improved food security and nutrition and increased community resilience to a changing environment, including through crop breeding and gene banks, biofortified crops, pest and disease control and climate-smart agriculture.[34] Information can be accessed easily by mobile phone, improving farmers' decision-making and management of climate risk.

84. The operationalization of the Technology Bank for the Least Developed Countries is helping the least developed countries to strengthen their science, technology and innovation capacities and fostering the development of national and regional innovation ecosystems that can attract outside technology and generate home-grown research, then take advancements to market.

85. The launch of the Technology Facilitation Mechanism to support the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals facilitates multi-stakeholder collaboration and partnerships through the sharing of information, experiences, best practices and policy advice among Member States, civil society, the private sector, the scientific community, United Nations entities and other stakeholders. Such initiatives and efforts can catalyse the transformation of agriculture.

86. States have a key role in enabling, supporting and complementing investments by smallholders, empowering them to invest responsibly, and in promoting an enabling policy, legal, regulatory and institutional environment for better and more responsible investment in agriculture and food systems.

87. FAO has developed a comprehensive umbrella programme to support countries, private companies and small-scale producers in enhancing responsible investment in agriculture and food systems. It promotes the application of the Principles for Responsible Investment in Agriculture and Food Systems of the Committee on World Food Security and is interlinked with the implementation of other guidance instruments, such as the Voluntary Guidelines on the Responsible Governance of Tenure of Land, Fisheries and Forests in the Context of National Food Security and the recently developed OECD-FAO Guidance for Responsible Agricultural Supply Chains.

88. For investments to effectively promote agriculture, rural development and inclusive growth, countries must also invest in rural non-farm economies, strengthen rural institutions and organizations, expand the coverage of social

[34] See www.cgiar.org/.

protection and public services to the rural poor and consider natural resource conservation and sustainable agricultural production, including by investing in climate-smart technologies.

B. Trade

89. With regard to means of implementation target 2.b of the Goals, some progress has been made in preventing distortions in world agricultural markets. The global agricultural export subsidies were reduced by 94 per cent from 2000 to 2014. In December 2015, members of the World Trade Organization adopted a ministerial decision on eliminating export subsidies for agricultural products and restraining export measures that have a similar effect (see E/2017/66). Specifically, they committed to advance the negotiations under the Doha Development Round, including the three pillars of agricultural reforms: domestic support, market access and export competition. They also committed to ensure that freer trade is supportive of development and reaffirmed the provisions for special and differential treatment for developing countries, prioritizing the concerns and interests of the least developed countries.

90. Both the Sustainable Development Goals and the mandate of the Doha Development Round have spurred policy reform for fisheries. In mid-2016, the importance of phasing out harmful fisheries subsidies, improving transparency and according special treatment to developing countries was stressed in a joint statement by FAO, the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development and the United Nations Environment Programme, which was co-signed by approximately 100 countries. A positive outcome of the Eleventh Ministerial Conference of the World Trade Organization, consistent with the 2020 deadline for phasing out certain forms of fisheries subsidies in target 14.6 of the Goals, will enlarge the rules-based system to the fisheries sector, helping to minimize the detrimental effects of overfishing and overcapacity at the multilateral level.

91. To make progress with global agricultural negotiations, which have faced multiple setbacks, requires balancing the benefits of lower trade barriers and the need to maintain the domestic policy space for agricultural development and food security. Developing countries are encouraged to formulate trade policies as part of a broader package of economic and social policies, prioritizing their long-term development objectives.

C. Price volatility and food commodity markets

92. With regard to means of implementation target 2.c of the Goals, in 2016, 21 countries experienced high or moderately high domestic prices relative to their historic levels for one or more staple cereal food commodities. Thirteen of those countries were in sub-Saharan Africa. The main causes of high prices were declines in domestic output, currency depreciation and insecurity. Localized increases in fuel prices also drove food prices higher.

93. The FAO Global Information and Early Warning System food price monitoring and analysis tool[35] contains up-to-date information and analysis on domestic prices of basic foods, mainly in developing countries, complementing FAO analysis on international markets. It provides early warning on high food prices at the country level that may negatively affect food security. In Central America, the System is facilitating the creation of an integrated regional market information system that

[35] Available from www.fao.org/giews/food-prices/home/en/.

will establish an online integrated and harmonized regional database of price, trade and production data. The project will also support the establishment of a regular reporting system.

94. In Rwanda and Senegal, the food price monitoring and analysis tool is being implemented with a view to it becoming the basis for establishing mobile data services — either through a smartphone application or text messaging — to deliver timely market information to smallholder farmers. The tool will become a key resource for analysts, decision makers and participants along the value chain, even those with limited or no access to the Internet.

IX. Conclusions and recommendations

95. Ending poverty, hunger and malnutrition is feasible and affordable and makes good business sense. Explicit political commitments with follow-up action and financing are needed to make ending hunger and poverty an international priority.

96. The ability to eradicate hunger and malnutrition and sustainably feed a growing population by 2030 depends on dedicated investments in agriculture, social protection, disaster risk reduction, education, health, aquatic ecosystem restoration, including fisheries, and efforts to develop the capacities of farmers, fishers, herders and forest-dependent communities to produce food and manage the natural environment.

97. Governments need to proactively adopt measures to reach those who are currently excluded from social protection systems, especially by extending social protection coverage to rural areas.

98. An integrated approach to tackling hunger and poverty also requires the joining of forces in social and developmental policymaking and programming. Complementing social protection effects, agricultural interventions must increase the production and productivity of smallholders and family farms by addressing structural constraints that limit access to land and water resources, inputs and financial, advisory and extension services, as well as markets.

99. Governments are encouraged to forge links and promote greater policy coherence and synergies among social protection programmes, food security, agricultural development, natural resources management, including of fisheries and forests, and rural poverty reduction.

100. Coherent policies, strong and accountable institutions and responsible investments are needed for sustainable food systems and natural resource management in the context of inclusive rural transformation and sustainable urbanization. They need to respect legitimate tenure rights and revitalize the agricultural sector while prioritizing women's empowerment and gender equality.

101. Reforms aimed at eliminating gender discrimination and promoting equal access to productive resources can help to ensure that women are equally prepared to cope with challenges and take advantage of the opportunities arising from changes shaping the rural economy.[36]

102. The importance of soil, land and natural resources in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals cannot be understated. Initiatives for the sustainable management of natural resources are having an impact in many countries.

[36] FAO, *The State of Food and Agriculture 2010-11: Women in agriculture — closing the gender gap for development* (Rome, 2011).

103. Strengthened and coordinated action is needed to promote the sustainable management of soil and land resources worldwide and at all levels for food security and resilient ecosystems and livelihoods, through an inclusive process enhancing access to land resources for marginalized groups and building on traditional knowledge systems and current scientific knowledge.

104. Achieving the Sustainable Development Goals will require a significant increase in the quantity and quality of investment in agriculture and rural areas, particularly in the most vulnerable countries, including those in protracted crises. Farmers are the largest investors in agriculture in developing countries and must be central to any strategy for increasing investment in the sector. They need a supportive policy environment based on economic incentives and ancillary public and private investments in infrastructure, market development and essential services. Support is urgently needed in areas in which climate change impacts, conflict and other adversities intersect and pose the greatest challenges to sustainable development.

105. Private investment alone cannot break entrenched cycles of rural poverty; additional public sector investments are needed to address market failures, encourage the development of the productive capacities of agricultural and rural households and improve rural infrastructure, transport, health and education.

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General and complete disarmament

Nuclear disarmament verification

Report of the Secretary-General

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I. Introduction

1. In paragraph 6 of its resolution 71/67 on nuclear disarmament verification, the General Assembly requested the Secretary-General to seek the views of Member States on the development and strengthening of practical and effective nuclear disarmament verification measures and on the importance of such measures in achieving and maintaining a world without nuclear weapons, and to report back to the General Assembly at its seventy-second session.

2. Pursuant to that resolution, on 20 February 2017, the Office for Disarmament Affairs sent a note verbale to all Member States requesting their views, followed by second a note verbale dated 12 June 2017. The replies received as at 31 July are contained in section II and are also available on the website of the Office for Disarmament Affairs.[1] The reply of the European Union is reproduced in section III, in accordance with the modalities set out in resolution 65/276, and is also available on the above-mentioned website. Additional replies received after 31 July 2017 will be posted on the website of the Office for Disarmament Affairs in the language of submission only.

II. Replies received from Governments

Argentina

[Original: Spanish]
[14 July 2017]

The Argentine Republic welcomes and supports the efforts being made at the multilateral level to ensure that nuclear-weapon States commit to moving forward on the transparency, effectiveness and irreversibility of the nuclear disarmament measures that they adopt on a unilateral, bilateral and, where applicable, multilateral basis.

In this regard, addressing verification from a constructive perspective allows for a focus on the technical aspects, thereby laying the groundwork to facilitate subsequent political understandings. The establishment of a group of governmental experts to consider the role of verification in the framework of the United Nations is conducive to the priority treatment of these issues within the United Nations machinery.

Argentina believes that there must be progress in measures to eliminate nuclear weapons that contain effective verification mechanisms.

In this connection, in May 2016 Argentina joined the International Partnership for Nuclear Disarmament Verification, on the understanding that it constitutes a concrete body that will enable progress in nuclear disarmament. The progress made in the framework of that informal partnership can contribute to future work undertaken within the United Nations. We therefore hope that the next group of governmental experts will take into account the documents and conclusions emanating from the Partnership.

Argentina considers that initiatives in the field of nuclear verification are consistent with and complement the efforts of the international community to advance the implementation of the obligations under article VI of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. In that regard, Argentina believes that nuclear disarmament should be complete and should be carried out in a verifiable, irreversible and transparent manner.

[1] www.un.org/disarmament/.

Australia

[Original: English]
[23 May 2017]

Australia welcomes and strongly supports General Assembly resolution 71/67 which requests, among other things, the establishment of a group of governmental experts to consider the role of verification in advancing nuclear disarmament. Australia was actively involved in the drafting of the resolution and was a co-sponsor. It has a strong interest in participating in the group of governmental experts on verification and looks forward to working with Norway and the broader global community to advance this initiative in 2018 and 2019.

Verification is an essential element in the process of achieving arms limitation and disarmament agreements, as underlined in the Disarmament Commission's Principles of Verification (1988). Since then, there have been some excellent collaborations that have advanced the verification agenda in concrete and practical ways, such as the initiative between Norway and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, commencing in 2007, in which for the first time a nuclear-weapon State and a non-nuclear-weapon State worked together to explore the challenges of nuclear weapon arms control and disarmament verification. The United States of America and the United Kingdom have continued to pursue cooperation on technical aspects of nuclear disarmament verification over a number of years.

At the 2010 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, in addition to committing to the principles of verifiability, transparency and irreversibility, all States agreed on the importance of supporting (international) cooperation aimed at increasing confidence, improving transparency and developing efficient verification capabilities related to nuclear disarmament (action 19).

Australia shares the view that there is no viable alternative to practical and verifiable steps as a path to nuclear disarmament. Australia believes that identifying and developing workable and effective verification and monitoring measures will foster enhanced confidence, underpin disarmament efforts and contribute to achieving and maintaining a world free of nuclear weapons. The group of governmental experts on verification offers a major opportunity to make tangible progress in advancing verifiable nuclear disarmament.

In April 2016, Australia submitted a working paper to the Open-ended Working Group on the fourth special session of the General Assembly devoted to Disarmament, which included the topic of verification and compliance as one of three agenda items in a niche model approach. Australia considers this an important area that Member States could advance in the current international climate. The working paper will be considered at the final Open-ended Working Group meeting in June 2017 and, if agreed, the outcomes of the group of governmental experts could feed into future special sessions on disarmament.

Australia welcomes the valuable contribution of the International Partnership for Nuclear Disarmament Verification. To be adequate and effective, verification must cover all relevant weapons, facilities, locations, installations and activities. Initiatives such as the International Partnership provide a forum for studying the many practical issues surrounding future verification mechanisms, and make a positive contribution to advancing nuclear disarmament, including by:

- Developing technical solutions to address monitoring and verification challenges

- Building verification knowledge and capacity in non-nuclear weapon states as well as nuclear weapon states
- Injecting the concrete experiences of multiple states into discussions over global zero by highlighting the technical work needed to facilitate verified disarmament

Australia is proud to be an active participant in the International Partnership and, with Poland, co-chairs working group two (on-site inspections). Australia and Japan have led consideration of transparency in working group one (monitoring and verification objectives) and Australia provides expertise to working group three (technical challenges and solutions). Australia would like to broaden the discussion so that more States have an opportunity to engage on this issue. Australia stands ready to contribute to the group of governmental experts on verification, if invited, drawing on its experience in the International Partnership as well as its long standing engagement on the peaceful uses of nuclear energy, including its extensive outreach programme within our Indo-Pacific region.

Brazil

[Original: English]
[31 July 2017]

Brazil supports the establishment of nuclear disarmament verification mechanisms under strict and effective international control. Disarmament verification initiatives will help achieve real progress towards the ultimate goal of freeing the world from nuclear weapons.

Bearing this objective in mind, Brazil has been participating in the International Partnership for Nuclear Disarmament Verification. Brazil also welcomed the establishment of a group of governmental experts to consider the role of verification in advancing nuclear disarmament pursuant to General Assembly resolution 71/67.

Such initiatives are confidence-building measures of great importance to create synergies between nuclear-weapon states, and those under the nuclear umbrella, and non-nuclear-weapon States for the full implementation of article VI of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons.

One example of a successful confidence-building measure that could be replicated is the Brazilian-Argentine Agency for Accounting and Control of Nuclear Materials which is based on the principle of "neighbours watching neighbours".

Brazil understands that the International Atomic Energy Agency should have a central role in the implementation of any kind of multilateral disarmament verification mechanism, not only because of its unparalleled expertise safeguarding nuclear programmes, but also owing to its legal authority in this domain, according to article III.B.1 of its Statute.

Brazil is of the view that the multilateralization of disarmament verification is required for the necessary transparency and irreversibility of the process. A multilateral and impartial organization should be present in all phases of disarmament operations, as it grants legitimacy and efficacy to the elimination of nuclear weapons.

Previous technical arrangements should not be an obstacle to achieve political goals on nuclear disarmament negotiations. Although recognizing the value of technical initiatives, Brazil is convinced that decisive political commitments are necessary to overcome the complex challenges leading to nuclear disarmament.

Brunei Darussalam

[Original: English]
[29 June 2017]

Brunei Darussalam supports disarmament efforts and the non-proliferation of all types of weapons of mass destruction, including nuclear weapons, at both the regional and global levels. Brunei Darussalam is a party to most of the major regional and global instruments pertaining to nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation, including the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban-Treaty.

Having signed and ratified the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban-Treaty, Brunei Darussalam supports all efforts towards an effective and all-encompassing verification regime. Brunei Darussalam is committed to comply with any on-site inspections, and continues to share information and data to ensure transparency and confidence.

Although Brunei Darussalam does not have specific nuclear disarmament verification measures that can monitor signs of nuclear explosions, its effort continues in the form of articulating its support and commitment on the international stage.

Burundi

[Original: French]
[19 May 2017]

Burundi has taken the following steps:

- Signature of the Nuclear Disarmament Treaty on 10 April 1972;
- Ratification of the Convention on that subject on 25 August 2006;
- Signature of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty on 24 September 1996 and ratification on 24 September 2008;
- Signature, on 27 September 2007, of the Protocol Additional to the Agreement between the Republic of Burundi and the International Atomic Energy Agency for the Application of Safeguards in Connection with the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons;
- Accession as a Member state of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) in June 2009, and cooperation with the Agency as a non-nuclear-weapon State.

The Republic of Burundi proposes that nuclear disarmament verification measures should follow the progressive approach and that diplomatic negotiations with nuclear-weapon States should be phased, with a view to the efficient implementation of the related Treaty in a balanced environment.

Canada

[Original: English]
[31 July 2017]

The present submission provides Canada's views on the development and strengthening of practical and effective nuclear disarmament verification measures and their importance in achieving and maintaining a world without nuclear weapons, as requested by the Secretary-General regarding General Assembly resolution 71/67, by which the Assembly decided to establish a group of

governmental experts to consider the role of verification in advancing nuclear disarmament.

Verification and international security

Verified compliance with arms control and disarmament regimes contributes to building trust among participating States parties which, in turn, provides considerable security benefits to the international community. While not an end in itself, effective verification is essential for creating and maintaining the necessary confidence for cooperation in these regimes. It can enhance credibility, help to build transparency and facilitate compliance. For States in regions of high tension and low trust, establishing and implementing a credible verification may be more difficult, but is even more critical for facilitating cooperation on disarmament issues. Verification is a key part of a nuclear disarmament process that promotes international stability, peace and security. Furthermore, as stated in action 2 of the final document from the 2010 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, verifiability, along with irreversibility and transparency, is central for States Parties to the Treaty to meet their disarmament obligations as specified in article VI.

The purpose of verification is to detect non-compliance, deter violators and build confidence among parties in a disarmament agreement. Compliance assessments are integral to the verification process and critical to achieving its objectives. These assessments depend on factors such as the nature of the obligations, the monitoring regime established in the agreement (including the degree of access), the compliance history of the parties and technical and analytical capacities. While international bodies with expertise relevant to disarmament verification may be engaged to undertake technical monitoring and verification activities, and potentially to enhance confidence in the process, the ultimate responsibility for making a compliance assessment normally rests with States parties.

States have the opportunity to demonstrate their compliance by undertaking transparency measures and providing additional information beyond their minimum legal obligations. Conversely, States need to consider that their non-participation or reluctance to be subjected to verification activities may undermine trust among States parties. In the case of inadvertent non-compliance (for example, because of a misinterpretation of obligations), encouragement and cooperation, including capacity-building, can help to bring States back into compliance. In the case of deliberate non-compliance, which directly challenges the security of other parties, strong enforcement measures will likely be required.

Canadian perspectives on verification

Since the mid-1980s, Canada has taken an active role in advancing the global recognition of the importance of verification in the context of international security. Over the years, this has included sponsoring regular resolutions at the General Assembly on verification in all its aspects, including the role of the United Nations in the field of verification, funding research and outreach efforts, contributing to the development of the 16 principles of verification released by the Disarmament Commission in 1988, chairing the 1995 Group of Governmental Experts mandated to examine verification in all its aspects, and chairing the 2006 Panel of Governmental Experts mandated to review further developments with respect to verification in all its aspects. In addition, as Chair of the 2014-2015 Group of Governmental Experts mandated to make recommendations on possible aspects that could contribute to, but not negotiate, a treaty banning the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices, Canada also led an

in-depth discussion on the important verification aspects of such a future treaty, as contained in the Group's report (A/70/81). Current Canadian efforts on verification include participation in all three working groups of the International Partnership for Nuclear Disarmament Verification and funding support for the Nuclear Threat Initiative in its role as the secretariat for the International Partnership.

Considerations regarding nuclear disarmament verification

Robust verification regimes can contribute to resolving complex regional challenges, such as facilitating efforts to establish new nuclear weapon free zones. In conjunction with transparency measures, such as those found in The Hague Code of Conduct or the Andean Charter for Peace and Security, and cooperative threat reduction activities, such as the Global Partnership against the Spread of Weapons and Materials of Mass Destruction, effective verification can strengthen international confidence and security. When all States are engaged and confident in the compliance of their neighbour, the implementation of disarmament obligations is likely to be more effective.

Effective verification is a key part of the disarmament process, in that without verification, States may lack confidence that disarmament commitments are being met. Nuclear disarmament verification, as a subset of broader verification efforts, is characterized by particular challenges. Most significantly, only a select few countries — notably the Non-Proliferation Treaty nuclear-weapon States of the United States of America and the Russian Federation — have direct experience with nuclear disarmament verification involving another nuclear-weapon State. In addition, there is no experience with the implementation of a disarmament verification regime targeted specifically at the dismantlement of nuclear explosive devices and the disposition of weapons-grade fissile materials, rather than at their delivery systems.

Among non-nuclear-weapon States, there is generally only a cursory understanding of the characteristics of nuclear explosive devices and of potential disarmament verification processes, due largely to the Non-Proliferation Treaty obligations of non-nuclear-weapon States which preclude them from gaining access to proliferation-sensitive information through any such process. Equally important are the Non-Proliferation Treaty obligations of nuclear-weapon States which prevent them from sharing any similar information with non-nuclear-weapon States. As a result, the current global expert base for nuclear disarmament verification is limited. Indeed, any nuclear disarmament effort must be highly sensitive to proliferation risks, and managed to be minimally intrusive (to prevent the release, inadvertent or otherwise, of information relating to the design and composition of a nuclear explosive device), yet provide sufficient assurance about compliance with the objectives of the disarmament regime in place.

The training of a professionally qualified cadre of specialists in nuclear disarmament verification, with geographically diverse representation from both non-nuclear-weapon States and nuclear-weapon States, could greatly contribute to global confidence in disarmament regimes. Otherwise, without broadening the availability of specialized skills for nuclear disarmament verification, these activities would largely be undertaken by nationals from nuclear-weapon States. Such training could build on the capabilities available in existing multilateral organizations and institutions, or draw from the experience of specific countries which have undertaken activities relevant to nuclear disarmament verification. For example, South Africa has experience terminating its nuclear weapons programme and dismantling its nuclear weapons; Kazakhstan learned from destroying its nuclear testing infrastructure; and the Brazilian-Argentine Agency for Accounting

and Control of Nuclear Materials has expertise in nuclear material safeguards activities.

Also, an increasing number of countries are currently investing in the development of national capabilities for nuclear forensic analysis. Primarily applied to combatting international trafficking in nuclear material and to securing domestic sources of nuclear material, these skills could potentially contribute to expanding the global capacity for nuclear disarmament verification. In addition, Canada, like other countries with a highly developed nuclear industry, could draw upon its expertise in the areas of nuclear physics and nuclear safeguards to contribute to disarmament verification. Through the Canadian Nuclear Laboratories, Canada has developed expertise in designing instruments for the detection of nuclear materials, including design, prototype testing, production and simulation of their response. The Laboratories also maintain a number of facilities with special nuclear materials which could be used to provide field training in security and verification activities. The verification of baseline declarations may require establishing a balance between access to secure locations and the protection of sensitive information of national security value to the host party. The use of national technical means to verify declarations and continued compliance could also be considered. If so, it would be important to address how States parties or the body assigned to oversee the implementation of the disarmament regime could best incorporate this information into their assessments.

Confirming compliance with nuclear disarmament verification regimes may also require monitoring the various stages in the production of nuclear weapons. This could involve continuous oversight of the various stages of the nuclear fuel cycle (e.g., monitoring the number of centrifuges and the level of enrichment) and of the facilities involved in re-processing nuclear fuel or those engaging in research and development.

A regime for nuclear disarmament may also need to consider indirect mechanisms to monitor for non-compliant behaviour. This could include a robust international system for alerting, monitoring, sharing information on dual-use technologies and materials and export controls to reduce the risk of clandestine weapons research or production.

Civil society, including industry, the financial sector, the media, academia and non-governmental organizations, could also play an important role in nuclear disarmament verification, including by raising awareness of non-proliferation, arms control, and disarmament obligations and commitments. Using open source methods and technologies, it can potentially contribute to an overarching alerting and monitoring system to sound alarms about non-compliant behaviour. It can also provide resources and expertise to States that may need assistance in national implementation.

Finally, the dismantling of nuclear weapons, which contain extremely hazardous material, requires careful consideration of safety issues that may impact human health and the environment.

Considerations regarding the work of the group of governmental experts

Review of the conclusions of the group of governmental experts on verification in all its aspects, including the role of the United Nations in the field of verification and the report of the group of governmental experts to make recommendations on possible aspects that could contribute to but not negotiate a treaty banning the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices. Consistent with the approach of earlier assessments of developments in the field of verification, Canada

suggests that the group of governmental experts review previous United Nations work in the area of verification. This effort should seek to draw upon recommendations that would have specific applicability to nuclear disarmament verification, including measures and mechanisms to ensure and enforce compliance.

Lessons from recent verification experiences. Although few multilateral exercises have explored the range of policy and technical issues requiring consideration for nuclear disarmament verification, those that have provide a deep pool of practical lessons learned. These include: the initiative of Norway and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland which demonstrated how a nuclear-weapon State and a non-nuclear-weapon State could work together on disarmament verification matters; the Trilateral Initiative between the United States of America, the Russian Federation and the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), which determined that IAEA was able to verify weapon-grade fissile material from defence programmes, without the release of any proliferation sensitive information; and the current International Partnership for Nuclear Disarmament Verification, which brings together more than two dozen nuclear-weapon and non-nuclear-weapon States to explore in-depth the technical and policy requirements for the dismantlement of a nuclear explosive device. A very recent initiative called the Quad Nuclear Verification Partnership, consisting of the United Kingdom, the United States, Norway and Sweden, has also commenced a multi-year effort to build capacity in nuclear disarmament verification, test new technologies and establish a verification protocol. In addition, the Verification Research, Training, and Information Centre delivers workshops and supports research on nuclear disarmament verification, which provides an additional resource for broadening the understanding of current verification challenges. Canada suggests that the group of governmental experts include a review of the findings from these initiatives.

Synergies with verification of a fissile material cut-off treaty. The high-level fissile material cut-off treaty expert preparatory group, chaired by Canada, will be undertaking work that may develop ideas on the verification requirements for an eventual fissile material cut-off treaty. Canada recommends that both the group of governmental experts and the preparatory group examine whether it is opportune to share information with each other on respective work pertaining to nuclear disarmament verification more broadly, and within the context of the requirements of a fissile material cut-off treaty.

Modalities for implementing multilateral nuclear disarmament verification. As expertise to undertake nuclear disarmament verification is lacking among most States, there may be value in drawing upon the verification resources and skills of an independent multilateral organization, such as IAEA. Statements to the IAEA General Conference suggest support for IAEA to assume a role in verifying nuclear disarmament. Canada recognizes that IAEA possesses considerable expertise with respect to safeguards tools and techniques, and that these skills may be relevant for an eventual nuclear disarmament verification inspectorate. Canada recommends that the group of governmental experts consider carefully the appropriate role for IAEA to assume, given its Statute and its existing commitments. The group of governmental experts may also consider assessing alternative options for the development of an independent disarmament verification inspectorate that could support the implementation of a nuclear disarmament regime.

Conclusion

Canada considers progress on nuclear disarmament verification as an essential enabler for broader disarmament efforts. This is true not only from a technical perspective, to ensure compliance, but is also important as a measure of transparency and for confidence-building among States. The security interests of all States can only be addressed if there is assurance that no one State is able to take undue advantage of the disarmament commitments of others. Canada therefore strongly supports the upcoming work of the group of governmental experts on nuclear disarmament verification and looks forward to its recommendations.

China

[Original: Chinese]
[29 July 2017]

Pursuant to General Assembly resolution 71/67, entitled "Nuclear disarmament verification", the Government of China presents herewith the following views on the issue of nuclear disarmament verification:

(1) Effective nuclear disarmament verification measures are important to ensuring successful nuclear disarmament and serve as important safeguards in the comprehensive prohibition and total elimination of nuclear weapons;

(2) Engaging in communication on the topic of nuclear disarmament verification will facilitate the development of mutual trust among nuclear-weapon States, and also between nuclear-weapon and non-nuclear-weapon States. It will also facilitate the provision of technical support for the development of the international nuclear disarmament process;

(3) There are many difficulties and challenges, both known and unknown, in the field of nuclear disarmament verification. Consequently, comprehensive and total nuclear disarmament will be a long-term process. It cannot be achieved overnight;

(4) Existing verification measures play an important role in ensuring the compliance of concerned parties with legal instruments relating to nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation. Substantial reductions in nuclear arsenals by the countries with the largest nuclear arsenals, in a verifiable and irreversible manner, are of great significance to the future development of the nuclear disarmament process. The extent to which their technology and experience can be applied elsewhere will serve as an important point of reference. In the future, international legal instruments relating to nuclear disarmament should, to the greatest extent possible, include corresponding verification mechanisms;

(5) The international community, in promoting research relating to nuclear disarmament verification, should fully consider the following issues:

(a) Given that nuclear disarmament verification involves sensitive information relating to nuclear weapons, relevant research should not undermine the security interests of nuclear-weapon States. Strict non-proliferation measures should be adopted, with particular attention paid to the protection of sensitive technology and information. Full consideration should be given to the relationship between the effectiveness of verification measures and their intrusiveness, and efforts should be made to fully guard against the risk of spreading knowledge relating to nuclear weapons;

(b) Nuclear disarmament verification involves the means of delivery, nuclear warheads, nuclear materials and other aspects of nuclear weapons. Given its

high degree of complexity, relevant research should focus on common technical issues. Efforts to strengthen research into disarmament verification procedures and steps should address the simplest issues first and move forward in a sequential manner;

(c) There are differences in the verification requirements of the various nuclear disarmament treaties. Substantive progress cannot be made by formulating verification measures that are not tied to specific treaties. We should not seek to establish a unified verification template that is universally applicable. The verification measures of the relevant nuclear disarmament treaties must be drawn up through negotiations among the sovereign States concerned. Current research into nuclear disarmament verification should proceed from an academic perspective, provide a wide range of options with respect to future nuclear disarmament, and focus on the feasibility and effectiveness of various verification measures;

(6) China is actively engaged in research into nuclear verification technologies and has made significant progress with respect to verification measures and technical methods, including the measurement of nuclear material properties, information barriers and chains of custody. China has developed technical methods for verification in States that are barred from conducting nuclear tests. It also played an important role in response to the radioactive leakage accident at the nuclear power plant in Fukushima, Japan, and in monitoring the nuclear tests conducted by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. Meanwhile, Chinese experts in nuclear technologies have engaged in numerous academic exchanges with their counterparts from the United States, the Russian Federation, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and other countries. They have also discussed relevant research findings at conferences of the permanent five members of the Security Council. China will continue to focus on research into verification technologies and participate in related international exchanges.

China hopes that the Office for Disarmament Affairs will include the above text, in its entirety, in the relevant report of the Secretary-General.

Colombia

[Original: Spanish]
[28 April 2017]

Colombia wishes to stress that all States parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons have a commitment to apply the principles of irreversibility, verifiability and transparency to effectively comply with the Treaty, especially as regards the effective implementation of article VI on nuclear disarmament.

Furthermore, for Colombia, the principle of transparency is essential in the field of nuclear disarmament verification and non-proliferation, as it contributes to confidence-building at the regional and global levels.

Finally, Colombia highlights the importance of the experience and best practices of IAEA in the implementation of any verification measures, taking into account IAEA experience in the application of the safeguards system.

Cuba

[Original: Spanish]
[5 July 2017]

The prohibition and total elimination of nuclear weapons is the only absolute guarantee against their use or threat of use. In order to be effective, the nuclear disarmament process must meet the criteria of transparency and irreversibility and be subject to strict international verification.

The need for strict and effective controls or systems in the field of international nuclear disarmament verification was endorsed both by the provisions of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and by the advisory opinion of the International Court of Justice of 1996 on the legality of the threat or use of nuclear weapons.

The principle of increased and undiminished security for all, leading to nuclear disarmament, contained in the sixth preambular paragraph of General Assembly resolution 71/67, can in no way be used as a pretext to justify the existence of nuclear weapons and to postpone indefinitely their prohibition and elimination.

Non-nuclear-weapon States have demonstrated their commitment to a nuclear-weapon-free world, limiting the use of nuclear energy exclusively to activities for peaceful purposes. Nevertheless, or precisely for that reason, future nuclear disarmament verification must involve all States, and not only nuclear-weapon States.

Verification activities must respect the sovereignty and national interests of States and, at the same time, be conducted in an impartial, objective and transparent manner, without double standards or manipulation for geopolitical purposes.

IAEA could play an important role in nuclear disarmament verification. The Agency has the capacity and expertise to conduct verification activities, in accordance with the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations, and thus contribute to the advancement of nuclear disarmament.

Despite the fact that the current IAEA structure is designed to verify the obligations of non-nuclear-weapon States in the context of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, IAEA also has a role in nuclear disarmament, including the application of safeguards on nuclear materials derived from the dismantling of nuclear weapons.

The establishment or creation of new IAEA capacities to address future challenges in disarmament verification would also be linked to capacity-building within IAEA member States and would essentially complement the Agency's policy in that regard.

France

[Original: French]
[26 July 2017]

An effective and efficient verification regime is essential to ensure the credibility of the instruments on disarmament, including nuclear disarmament. The regime should enable all parties to a disarmament instrument, be it bilateral, plurilateral or multilateral, to have the necessary confidence that the commitments of the various parties will be implemented.

As stated in the Final Document of the Tenth Special Session of the General Assembly, disarmament instruments should contain "adequate measures of

verification satisfactory to all parties concerned." Verification measures should take into account the concerns relating to security, safety and non-proliferation of States hosting nuclear weapons.

In that context:

(a) France supported General Assembly resolution 71/67, by which the General Assembly established a group of governmental experts, because France is of the view that dialogue on nuclear disarmament verification between nuclear-weapon States and non-nuclear-weapon States helps to build confidence, which is essential for arms control and disarmament and is a factor in strategic stability;

(b) France also participates in the International Partnership for Nuclear Disarmament Verification, which brings together more than 20 States to consider the technical challenges of nuclear disarmament verification. The focus of the first phase of the Partnership was on the verification of the dismantlement of a nuclear explosive device, which is one of the most complex aspects of nuclear disarmament verification. The Partnership, which includes nuclear-weapon States and non-nuclear-weapon States, aims to increase understanding of the technical challenges and the competencies necessary for nuclear disarmament verification.

The development of technical and procedural competencies is essential for effective verification and the taking into account of the security, safety and non-proliferation considerations of nuclear-weapon States. Nuclear disarmament verification in a multilateral context differs from the nuclear arms control verification that may be undertaken by two nuclear-weapon States at the bilateral level. Existing technologies and procedures are not adequate to address all of the nuclear disarmament verification security, safety and non-proliferation issues at play in a multilateral arrangement involving non-nuclear-weapon States and one or more nuclear-weapon States. Significant work should be undertaken in this area, including the development of technological information barriers and technology authentication procedures;

(c) A disarmament verification regime should not be put in place *in abstracto* but should be linked to a specific disarmament treaty and adapted to the specific circumstances of each nuclear-weapon State;

(d) France actively participated in the discussions on the verification of a treaty banning the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices (fissile material cut-off treaty) by the Group of Governmental Experts that met in 2014 and 2015. In that connection, France will continue, among other things, to contribute to the discussions of the international community on the verification of such a treaty and the definition of the fissile material concerned during the 2017 and 2018 sessions of the high-level fissile material cut-off treaty expert preparatory group;

(e) All nuclear disarmament verification initiatives should take into account the non-proliferation obligations established in articles I and II of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. They should also respect the principle of undiminished security for all, which has been recognized in the context of the Non-Proliferation Treaty review process;

(f) However, a world without nuclear weapons cannot be achieved through the development of verification capabilities alone. The evolution of the security context underlies all nuclear disarmament efforts, in accordance with the progressive approach called for in article VI of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons;

The evolution of the strategic context enabled France to reduce its nuclear arsenal by half in just under 10 years. The size of the French nuclear forces is determined in accordance with the principle of strict sufficiency. In keeping with that principle, the French arsenal is maintained at the lowest possible level compatible with the strategic context and the foreseeable development of the threat;

(g) In addition to bilateral, plurilateral and multilateral nuclear disarmament verification instruments, political commitments accompanied by transparency measures play an important role in nuclear disarmament. France has made considerable efforts in that regard.

It ceased all production of plutonium for its nuclear weapons in 1992 and announced a moratorium on the production of highly enriched uranium in 1996. Also in 1996, it took the decision to dismantle its facilities for the production of fissile materials for nuclear weapons, located at the Pierrelatte and Marcoule sites. This dismantling, which is still under way, is irreversible. It comes at a considerable financial cost and presents a significant challenge in terms of implementation and expertise. France is the only nuclear-weapon State to have opened the doors of its former facilities for the production of fissile materials for nuclear weapons to the international community. It granted access to more than 40 States members of the Conference on Disarmament in 2008 and to over 20 non-governmental experts and some 30 international journalists in 2009. In 2018 France will once again allow access to its facilities, this time to the high-level fissile material cut-off treaty expert preparatory group, in which France participates.

France is the only State that has had a surface-to-surface nuclear force and subsequently completely dismantled it on the basis of a unilateral decision. In 2015, representatives of approximately 50 States members of the Conference on Disarmament visited the Plateau d'Albion, where the silos that used to house the surface-to-surface component have been completely dismantled. The representatives also visited the empty weapons storage depots at the Luxeuil air base, which gave them an opportunity to observe the concrete and sincere nature of the decision taken by France in 2008 to reduce its airborne nuclear component by a third and to convert the Luxeuil base, which was originally dedicated to deterrence, into an air policing mission.

France also decided to irreversibly close its Pacific Experimentation Centre and, in an unprecedented step for a nuclear-weapon State, granted an international expert mission access so that it could assess the effects of French nuclear testing on the environment. The mission resulted in the publication of a report by the International Atomic Energy Agency.

Germany

[Original: English]
[13 May 2017]

Nuclear disarmament verification is an essential element of a step-by-step approach towards a world without nuclear weapons. The principle of irreversibility, as it was reaffirmed in the 2010 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, necessitates that nuclear disarmament be accompanied by a robust verification regime in order to ensure that commitments made under a disarmament treaty are effectively met.

Germany advocates for a multilateral approach to nuclear disarmament verification. Capacities should be built among States with and without nuclear weapons to develop solutions for monitoring and verification challenges across the whole nuclear weapons lifecycle: from material production and control to warhead

storage and dismantlement and disposition. Germany believes that future arms control treaties and agreements will need to provide for new and intrusive provisions, effective on-site inspections and new items subject to inspection, all of this notwithstanding the provisions of articles I and II of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. Germany has the technical expertise and experience to strengthen effective nuclear disarmament verification. As a non-nuclear-weapons State, Germany can provide particular input to a group of governmental experts on nuclear disarmament verification by (a) furthering academic education in the field of nuclear disarmament verification, addressing both political and technical issues, for postgraduate students; (b) increasing technical expertise through training of experts and scientists; (c) developing innovative systems concepts for verification regimes in multilateral nuclear disarmament approaches; (d) conducting research and development projects for improving nuclear verification techniques and procedures, such as surveillance technologies, sealing systems, environmental sampling, nuclear measurement equipment, geospatial information analysis, statistical methodologies, and sample planning; (e) co-organizing and participating in exercises aimed at testing and, where necessary, improving on-site inspection procedures; (f) applying technical knowledge, competences and experiences in nuclear verification gained through the International Atomic Energy Agency Safeguards Support Programme in Germany, since 1978, including the development of nuclear verification equipment, field tests and training of inspectors; and (g) growing national and international networking of technical experts.

For Germany, the International Partnership for Nuclear Disarmament Verification plays a focal role for developing practical verification measures. The objective of the International Partnership is to promote increased international understanding of, and confidence in, the monitoring and verification of future nuclear arms control and disarmament agreements by strengthening cooperative work between nuclear-weapon States and non-nuclear-weapon States. Germany supports the International Partnership with three external technical experts and hosted its working Group meetings in March 2017.

Hungary

[Original: English]
[12 May 2017]

General observations on multilateral nuclear disarmament and its verification

Hungary fully supports the ultimate goal of a complete, irreversible and verifiable nuclear disarmament for the pursuit of which article VI of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons provides the fundamental framework, as part of a balanced implementation of all provisions of the Treaty, which remains the cornerstone of multilateral nuclear disarmament, the global nuclear non-proliferation regime and the peaceful uses of nuclear energy.

States Members of the United Nations have divergent views on how to accomplish legally binding multilateral nuclear disarmament. However, there is general agreement that effective and reliable verification and monitoring mechanisms and instruments are crucial building blocks for the realization of a world free of nuclear weapons.

The Government of Hungary shares the view that adequate verification tools and capabilities, as essential requirements, should be readily available by the time the necessary political and security conditions are in place for the negotiation and conclusion of future multilateral nuclear disarmament agreements. Therefore,

Hungary not only voted in favour but also co-sponsored General Assembly resolution 71/67 on nuclear disarmament verification, requesting the Secretary-General to establish a group of governmental experts to consider the role of verification in advancing nuclear disarmament.

Another strong reason for the Government of Hungary to support General Assembly resolution 71/67 was the firm conviction that nuclear-weapon States and non-nuclear-weapon States should work together on multilateral nuclear disarmament verification, in conformity with their obligations under the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. While nuclear-weapon States bear a special responsibility in this area, non-nuclear-weapon States can also make an important contribution to this complex endeavour. Furthermore, their involvement enhances the transparency of the whole process and also increases confidence by providing assurance of compliance with future multilateral nuclear disarmament treaty obligations.

Contribution of Hungary to nuclear disarmament with a view to its verification

Hungary was a member of the group of governmental experts set up by the General Assembly in resolution 67/53 to make recommendations on the possible aspects that could contribute to future negotiations on a non-discriminatory, internationally and effectively verifiable treaty banning the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices, which would be the next logical step towards multilateral nuclear disarmament. The final report of the group of governmental experts, adopted by consensus, covers verification issues extensively. Therefore, the work of the high-level expert preparatory group on the fissile material cut-off treaty set up by the Assembly in resolution 71/59 to make recommendations on substantial elements of a future treaty and that of the group of governmental experts tasked to consider the role of verification in advancing nuclear disarmament established by the Assembly in resolution 71/67 should be complementary and mutually reinforcing.

The Government of Hungary has also been a staunch supporter of a comprehensive ban on nuclear tests. Consequently, between 2013 and 2015 Hungary served as one of the two article XIV co-coordinators mandated to promote the entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty. Lessons learned from the activities of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization are also relevant in the context of General Assembly resolution 71/67, because, although still not in force, the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty has a comprehensive verification regime including a unique global International Monitoring System that can provide the international community with valuable information concerning the verification of nuclear disarmament.

As a non-nuclear-weapon State, Hungary has gained considerable experience relevant to nuclear disarmament verification through the Hungarian safeguards support programme. This programme was initiated nearly two decades ago, with the objective of contributing to the strengthening of the effectiveness of the International Atomic Energy Agency safeguards system, playing a vital role in the implementation of relevant obligations under the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. The support programme focuses on three major groups of activities: (a) hosting and providing expertise for different training activities for IAEA, including comprehensive inspection exercise training and additional protocol complementary access exercise; (b) providing facility environment for testing newly developed safeguards technologies, especially containment and surveillance equipment either serving the traditional safeguards approach or those to be used under the integrated safeguards systems; and (c) supporting international safeguards verification by *developing methods and equipment for nuclear material*

identification for national safeguards verification purposes. Hungary also actively takes part in solving new, challenging issues that emerge through the implementation of novel safeguards and verification technologies.

Group of governmental experts established by the General Assembly in resolution 71/67

The group of governmental experts established by the General Assembly in resolution 71/67 does not have to start its activities from scratch, since it can draw on the outcome of work carried out earlier in this field. In the United Nations framework, the most important documents are the 16 Principles of Verification agreed by the Disarmament Commission in 1988, the studies produced by two groups and a panel of governmental experts and the 2008 report of the United Nations Office of Disarmament Affairs on verification in all its aspects, including the role of the United Nations in the field of verification.

More recently, there have been a number of relevant bilateral and wider initiatives such as the initiative of Norway and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, the Quad Nuclear Verification Partnership started by Norway, Sweden, the United Kingdom and the United States of America, and the International Partnership on Nuclear Disarmament Verification, launched by the United States. These projects focus on different aspects of nuclear disarmament verification, but all of them are aimed at assisting the development of an effective and reliable verification system for nuclear disarmament.

The experience the international community has gained from already existing treaty verification mechanisms (e.g., the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on their Destruction) should also be carefully studied by the group of governmental experts.

The Government of Hungary is of the view that the main objective of the group of governmental experts should be to review and integrate into the United Nations system the political, security, technical and legal aspects of lessons learned from the above-mentioned sources of information. This would enable all States Members to better understand the complexity of the issues involved and facilitate their contribution to addressing monitoring and verification challenges associated with the entire lifecycle of nuclear weapons including their dismantlement and disposition.

India

[Original: English]
[11 May 2017]

India voted in favour of General Assembly resolution 71/67 in view of the importance of increasing common understanding on international and effective verification in multilateral legal instruments for the elimination of weapons of mass destruction, which would also be an essential element of a comprehensive convention on nuclear weapons.

India acknowledges the utility of technical work on verification as proposed in resolution 71/67, which can build upon past work done in the Disarmament Commission on the subject, and keeping in mind the principles enshrined in the tenth special session of the General Assembly. At the same time, such work cannot prejudge the nature and scope of any eventual nuclear disarmament instrument, which would in turn impact on the verification elements to be agreed and specific to that instrument. Work on verification in the proposed group of governmental experts cannot be a substitute for *the established disarmament machinery — the Conference*

on Disarmament and the Disarmament Commission — addressing the issue of nuclear disarmament verification in line with the scope of a future comprehensive instrument on nuclear disarmament.

In India's view, the context for the resolution is global and non-discriminatory nuclear disarmament and the complete elimination of nuclear weapons. In this regard, any role for the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) would be limited to what is specified in the statute of IAEA. Relevant verification experience from a treaty banning an entire category of weapons of mass destruction and providing for their internationally verifiable elimination, namely the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on their Destruction, could also be usefully studied in this context. International and effective verification is also an important aspect of the agreed mandate for a future treaty banning the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices.

Japan

[Original: English]
[2 June 2017]

Development and strengthening of practical and effective nuclear disarmament verification measures

Japan has maintained a realistic and practical approach in promoting nuclear disarmament, and underlines the importance of studying potential verification measures and activities, as well as of developing tools and technologies for verification in the nuclear disarmament process. This will facilitate medium- and long-term efforts to achieve a world free of nuclear weapons.

Japan, as a non-nuclear-weapon State, has amassed highly advanced knowledge and technologies related to the peaceful uses of nuclear energy, including robust safeguards technology, as well as expertise in on-site inspections of relevant arms control and disarmament instruments including the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on their Destruction. This knowledge can contribute to discussions on nuclear disarmament verification.

Based on the above-mentioned expertise, Japan has actively contributed to discussions on verification technologies as well as operating procedures of on-site inspections in the International Partnership for Nuclear Disarmament Verification, in which both nuclear-weapon States and non-nuclear-weapon States work together to explore solutions to complex challenges involved in the verification of nuclear disarmament.

In order to achieve a world free of nuclear weapons, a robust and reliable international verification regime must be established with engagement by both nuclear-weapon States and non-nuclear-weapon States. In this context, the group of governmental experts on nuclear disarmament verification to be established under the General Assembly in 2018 can build on the work of the International Partnership.

Existing research efforts for the verification of nuclear disarmament include the Trilateral Initiative, a cooperative effort by the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), the United States of America and the Russian Federation; the United States-United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland technical collaboration; and the United Kingdom-Norway Initiative on verification of

warhead dismantlement. Discussions on nuclear verification can build on these previous initiatives, as well as the International Partnership.

The following factors should be taken into account, among others, in studying and developing practical and effective measures on nuclear disarmament verification:

(a) Verification must be effective, and must provide sufficient confidence and transparency to relevant parties to an agreement that other parties are complying with obligations;

(b) Verification mechanisms must prevent transfer of proliferation-sensitive information, including design information and manufacturing techniques related to nuclear weapons or other explosive devices;

(c) Verification mechanisms must ensure the safety of personnel, such as inspectors, carrying out verification activities. It must also ensure the security of items to be verified which may be targeted by criminal activity, such as nuclear materials and related facilities;

(d) Verification mechanisms must contribute to confidence-building;

(e) Verification mechanisms must be as effective as possible while still considering its efficiency.

Importance of such measures in achieving and maintaining a world free of nuclear weapons

The international community has demonstrated increasing interest in how nuclear-weapon States comply with and implement treaties or agreements relating to nuclear disarmament and arms control. Verifiability makes it possible to confirm whether parties implement and comply with their treaty obligations. The three principles of verifiability, irreversibility and transparency are needed to advance the nuclear disarmament process, and are indispensable to ensuring the effectiveness of nuclear disarmament measures. These principles have been mentioned in the relevant documents, including the final document of the 2010 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons.

Pursuant to article VI of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, all States parties, including non-nuclear-weapon States as well as nuclear-weapon States, are responsible for efforts towards a world free of nuclear weapons.

It is extremely difficult, technically, to conduct verification on nuclear disarmament even among nuclear-weapon States because it involves national security at the most confidential level. Serious challenges will arise in nuclear disarmament verification efforts with the involvement of non-nuclear-weapon States due to obligations in articles 1 and 2 of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, under article 1, nuclear-weapon States undertake not to transfer to any recipient whatsoever nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices or control over such weapons or explosive devices directly, or indirectly, and not in any way to assist, encourage, or induce any non-nuclear-weapon State to manufacture or otherwise acquire nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices, or control over such weapons or explosive devices; under article 2 of the Treaty, non-nuclear-weapon States undertake not to acquire or exercise control over nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices and not to seek or receive assistance in the manufacture of such devices. Nuclear disarmament verification should provide credible assurance while ensuring the protection of highly sensitive and confidential information.

As the number of nuclear weapons decreases, the strategic value of a single nuclear warhead will increase, as will the level of assurance required for verification on disarmament treaties. Verification and transparency will thus become increasingly important. In addition, in order to realize the goal of a world without nuclear weapons, a robust and reliable international verification system with an involvement of nuclear-weapon States will need to be established.

While further studies are still needed on the role to be played by non-nuclear-weapon States in actual verification activities for the nuclear disarmament of nuclear-weapon States, it is imperative to engage both nuclear-weapon and non-nuclear-weapon States in efforts to construct a robust and credible international verification regime. Non-nuclear-weapon States' technical and institutional contributions are crucial to attaining and maintaining a world free of nuclear weapons.

Jordan

[Original: Arabic]
[19 May 2017]

Jordan is fully committed to the principles of nuclear disarmament. The total elimination of such weapons is the only guarantee against their use or threat of use. Jordan does, however, have an inherent right to the peaceful use of nuclear energy in accordance with the standards of the International Atomic Energy Agency and under its supervision.

Weapons of mass destruction are the greatest challenge facing the world, and it would be better for everyone if they did not exist. However, nuclear disarmament faces significant obstacles and has not been given the focus that it requires. The cost of producing and manufacturing nuclear weapons accounts for a huge share of the concerned States' military budgets.

The Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons is the cornerstone of the international disarmament and non-proliferation regime. Yet although it has gained worldwide acceptance, its effects have not been far-reaching enough. Jordan believes that the current situation makes matters more difficult: the world is set to drift towards a nuclear arms race.

Jordan continues to support and encourage every effort to establish a nuclear-weapon-free zone. However, certain States in the region continue to stand in the way of the peoples' wish to live in a world free of nuclear terror. Their purpose is to control the region and interfere in the internal affairs of its States.

Jordan supports all of the Agency's efforts to consolidate and integrate the safeguards regime with a view to verifying that the nuclear activities of all States, without distinction, are carried out in a peaceful manner. IAEA is the only organization empowered to monitor States' safeguards agreements. The international community must take seriously the fears of numerous non-nuclear States and begin to prepare a legally binding instrument to prohibit nuclear weapons with a view to their elimination.

International and regional efforts towards the elimination of nuclear weapons are a source of hope and optimism that the world is becoming more aware of the danger posed by their proliferation. However, those efforts must be backed by the genuine and strong political will of all States, particularly those that possess and manufacture such weapons.

Lebanon

[Original: Arabic]
[8 May 2017]

The Ministry of National Defence wishes to make the following points:

- Lebanon does not possess or produce nuclear weapons. Lebanese territory is therefore completely free of all forms of nuclear weapons.
- Lebanon supports and welcomes all initiatives to achieve nuclear disarmament, particularly in the Middle East, and emphasizes that the region must become free of weapons of mass destruction.
- Lebanon joins its voice to those of the other Arab States and stresses before the international community that all States, particularly Israel, must comply with international law and ensure complete nuclear disarmament.

Madagascar

[Original: French]
[22 June 2017]

The United Nations has made the following recommendations to Member States:

– Further efforts should be made to reduce and eliminate all types of nuclear weapons;

– The nuclear-weapon States should accomplish the total elimination of their nuclear arsenals;

– Practical nuclear disarmament verification measures should be strengthened.

In that regard, verification requires capacities for detection, dissuasion and the building of confidence among parties in order to establish effective multilateral mechanisms in the context of resolution 71/67.

Given that Madagascar does not possess nuclear weapons and has no qualified personnel in that field, it is not in a position to provide relevant information on the technical aspects of nuclear disarmament and must therefore seek the assistance of other States on that subject.

Mexico

[Original: Spanish]
[12 May 2017]

Mexico has stressed the urgency of strengthening the nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation regime and works to renew the international community's commitment to advance towards the definitive elimination of these weapons, through multilateral nuclear disarmament negotiations, in accordance with the principles of verification, irreversibility and transparency.

Mexico has repeatedly indicated that unilateral, bilateral and regional efforts to reduce nuclear weapons should be verified internationally, recalling also that States parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons have committed to pursue negotiations in good faith to halt the nuclear arms race under strict and effective international control. It has further indicated that one of the systematic steps for nuclear disarmament agreed by the parties to the Treaty is the

training of senior officials in non-nuclear-weapon States to enable them to participate in nuclear disarmament verification.

Mexico believes that international verification, as a confidence-building measure, is key to assuring nuclear disarmament. Such verification must be transparent.

During the cycle of the 2015 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, Mexico, together with the members of the New Agenda Coalition, submitted a working paper entitled "Multilateral nuclear disarmament verification: applying the principles of irreversibility, verifiability and transparency". The document is intended to contribute to the implementation of the action plan adopted at the 2010 Review Conference, by urging support for the development of appropriate verification arrangements, within the context of IAEA, to ensure the irreversible removal of fissile material designated by each nuclear-weapon State as not required for military purposes.

The document also reflects concern at the failure to adopt concrete measures to strengthen the safeguards of the nuclear-weapon States, despite the fact that those States have signed and ratified additional protocols to their safeguards agreements. In this regard, it highlights the opposite case of the non-nuclear-weapon States, which have made efforts to strengthen the safeguards system, including the development of comprehensive safeguards agreements, the Model Additional Protocol and integrated safeguards.

It is noted in the document that fissile material that has been declared as permanently removed from the military programmes of nuclear-weapon States, including material that has been placed under IAEA safeguards, can still be withdrawn from those safeguards and used in the development of nuclear weapons. Hence, these measures do not comply with the principles of irreversibility, verifiability and transparency that have already been agreed, and provide no assurances regarding the irreversible removal of fissile material from military programmes.

Moreover, it is noted that a multilateral verification regime must be effective and credible, while respecting the requirement to maintain confidentiality in relation to sensitive weapons design and composition.

In addition, it is stated in the document that it is important, within the framework of IAEA, to conclude strengthened safeguards and enhanced verification arrangements to ensure the application of safeguards in perpetuity on material irreversibly removed from nuclear weapons programmes. IAEA is called on to take the necessary measures to support the development of new legally binding agreements, and it is proposed that the new verification measures should be underpinned by the reaffirmation of a moratorium on fissile material production for nuclear weapons.

Through the New Agenda Coalition's paper, nuclear-weapon States are encouraged to initiate, or where appropriate accelerate, multilateral arrangements to place fissile material no longer used for military purposes under the IAEA verification system and to allocate such material for peaceful purposes. Those States are also urged to commit to submitting accurate, complete and comprehensive annual reports on their nuclear arsenals; the existence of weapons-grade highly enriched uranium and plutonium; production records; and material irreversibly removed from nuclear weapons programmes.

In parallel, at the express invitation of the United States of America, Mexico participates in the International Partnership for Nuclear Disarmament Verification, the purpose of which is to promote discussion on how the dismantlement of nuclear

weapons would be verified multilaterally and with the participation of nuclear-weapon and non-nuclear-weapon States. The objective of these discussions between experts and diplomats is to define capacity-building needs in countries, such as Mexico, where there are no nuclear weapons, as well as to provide an opportunity to strengthen ties of cooperation among peers.

The International Partnership's work has two main stages: a first stage dedicated to information on best practices in the matter, in order to conduct a nuclear weapon dismantlement verification exercise; and a second stage focused on establishing action lines that will define the way forward for the initiative itself.

Mexico has participated in the four plenary meetings held by the Partnership, namely:

- Washington, D.C., 19 and 20 March 2015, chaired by the United States, held with the aim of launching the initiative. At that meeting there was an initial exchange of views on the general situation and of some specific experiences of disarmament and verification cooperation, as well as discussions related to the initiative's objectives and future agenda.
- Oslo, 16 to 18 November 2015, with the aim of making progress in the work of the Partnership. On that occasion, three working groups were established (monitoring and verification objectives, on-site inspections and technical challenges and solutions); achievements and lessons learned were presented; dialogue between nuclear-weapon and non-nuclear-weapon States was promoted; the different procedures in the various monitoring and verification regimes were presented; and understanding of other verification and disarmament research efforts was enhanced.
- Tokyo, 27 June to 1 July 2016, at which parallel meetings of the three working groups were held. Mexico participated in the meetings of working group 1, focused on defining the objectives and principles for the establishment of a framework for action for a hypothetical monitoring, verification and disarmament scenario involving one or more nuclear weapons.
- Abu Dhabi, 1 to 3 November 2016, with the goal of defining the principles that should underpin verification.

Mexico also participated in the working group meetings that took place from 6 to 8 March 2017 in Berlin.

Mexico will continue to promote nuclear disarmament verification, in the belief that it:

- Allows the parties to assess the status of implementation of an agreement and provides a good indicator of the functioning of the agreement.
- Discourages non-compliance with the provisions of the agreement.
- Gives an advance warning of any violation of the terms of an agreement.
- Confirms that the obligations of an agreement are met effectively while helping to build confidence and certainty surrounding the agreement and confirms that its mechanisms are functioning as planned, thus assuring peace between the parties.

Norway

[Original: English]
[31 July 2017]

Norway was one of the main sponsors of General Assembly resolution 71/67 on nuclear disarmament verification, and reiterates its firm commitment to contribute to further efforts to reduce and eliminate all types of nuclear weapons. On 26 April 2016, the Norwegian parliament adopted a unanimous decision asking the Government to work actively towards the goal of a world free of nuclear weapons and to promote the implementation of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. The decision also asked the Government to play a leading role in efforts to promote non-proliferation and disarmament, with a view to achieving balanced, mutual, irreversible and verifiable elimination of nuclear weapons. The Government was asked to take a long-term approach to those efforts in order to secure a legally binding framework for achieving this.

Verification will be a key building block for achieving and maintaining a world without nuclear weapons. At the Review Conferences of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, the nuclear-weapon States have reaffirmed their unequivocal undertaking to accomplish the total elimination of their nuclear weapons. The nuclear arsenals have been dramatically downsized in recent decades, as a result of either bilateral agreements (such as the Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty and the Treaty between the United States of America and the Russian Federation on Measures for the Further Reduction and Limitation of Strategic Offensive Arms, the Treaty between the Russian Federation and the United States of America on Strategic Offensive Reductions and the Treaty between the United States of America and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics on the Elimination of Their Intermediate-Range and Shorter-Range Missiles), reciprocal declarations or unilateral measures. Some agreements have led to the development of verification and monitoring instruments, but only for the parties involved. It should be noted that the parties to the Treaty between the United States of America and the Russian Federation on Measures for the Further Reduction and Limitation of Strategic Offensive Arms have kept the broader international community informed on the implementation of this treaty, which is essential from the perspective of transparency.

The key principles of nuclear disarmament — irreversibility, verifiability and transparency — have been set out in a number of outcome documents from the United Nations as well as from Review Conferences of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. There have been considerable efforts within the United Nations to further refine generic approaches to verification of disarmament in all its aspects, through the 16 Principles of Verification of the Disarmament Commission and the work carried out by groups of governmental experts set up by the General Assembly. Broader verification and inspection tools have been developed at the multilateral level under non-nuclear treaties such as the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on their Destruction.

Within the nuclear field, important experience has been gained from the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty monitoring system and from the implementation of the International Atomic Energy Agency safeguards agreements, including the additional protocol. These non-proliferation measures are essential in creating a more conducive environment for nuclear disarmament. They should be further strengthened so that they can form part of the legal architecture in a world without nuclear weapons.

While the nuclear-weapon States have the prime responsibility for reducing and eventually eliminating their nuclear arsenals, non-nuclear-weapon States should also contribute to this end. Recalling the tenth principle of the Disarmament Commission, which reads "All States have equal rights to participate in the process of international verification of agreements to which they are parties", it follows that non-nuclear-weapon States have a legitimate right to be assured that nuclear-weapon States actually carry out their obligations under future multilateral nuclear disarmament regimes. The involvement of non-nuclear-weapon States in verification and inspection arrangements must comply with the non-proliferation obligations of the Non-Proliferation Treaty.

In its resolution 71/67, the General Assembly noted the contribution of representatives of civil society from the non-governmental, academic and research communities in nuclear disarmament verification. In this context, it should be noted that for many years Norwegian experts have been exploring ways in which non-nuclear-weapon States can obtain the necessary assurances without acquiring sensitive information. Norway has provided funding for the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research and the Verification Research, Training and Information Centre based in the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland. Norway was also represented in the ad hoc group of scientific experts in the lead-up to the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty negotiations.

The United Kingdom-Norway Initiative

Since 2007, Norway has cooperated with the United Kingdom on nuclear warhead dismantlement verification research through the United Kingdom-Norway Initiative. As the first instance of collaboration between a nuclear-weapon State and a non-nuclear-weapon State, the Initiative has paved the way for broadening nuclear weapon verification research further to include non-nuclear-weapon States.

The United Kingdom-Norway Initiative has demonstrated that it is possible for a nuclear-weapon State and a non-nuclear-weapon State to work constructively in partnership on the complex issues that nuclear weapon dismantlement verification raises. The Initiative has made progress on the development of mutually trusted equipment, it has tested inspection procedures for specific tasks under "managed access" arrangements in nuclear facilities, and it has researched factors that influence the outcome of inspections in nuclear weapon verification. The Initiative has also involved a significant outreach component, with participants from a number of other States attending Initiative research exercises and briefings.

Norway and the United Kingdom presented comprehensive working papers at the 2010 and 2015 Review Conferences detailing the activities carried out and the lessons learned through the Initiative.

Broader initiatives

Norway, Sweden, the United Kingdom and the United States have entered into a multi-year arms control simulation initiative. The Quad Nuclear Verification Partnership builds on experience from the United Kingdom-Norway Initiative and previous United Kingdom-United States verification and arms control exercises. With its long-standing track record in the field of arms control, verification and disarmament, Sweden brings valuable additional expertise to the partnership.

The Quad can make a tangible contribution to the current Non-Proliferation Treaty cycle and to the fulfilment of article VI of the Treaty. It aims to provide the international community with:

- Capacity-building, in the form of hands-on practical experience of nuclear weapons-related verification
- A realistic testbed for exercising and evaluating monitoring technologies that all states could use to support their work on verification issues
- A model verification protocol — or standard operating procedure — that could contribute to future discussions on how treaty monitoring activities could be implemented in the real world

This step toward multilateralism will be valuable for understanding the impact of including multiple nuclear-weapon States and non-nuclear-weapon States in future verification activities. The aim is to demonstrate that such collaboration is beneficial without promoting proliferation.

Norway highlights the importance of the International Partnership for Nuclear Disarmament Verification, in which it is an active member, in pursuing the development of a culture of cooperation and trust. This partnership can also advance a common understanding of the technical issues of nuclear disarmament verification among a larger group of States through the sharing of experience and coordinated efforts.

The 25 countries in the International Partnership are working to develop innovative approaches, methodologies and techniques for nuclear disarmament monitoring and verification, so that they subsequently may be shared with the broader international community. The aim is that these will in turn foster a culture of confidence, which is essential for making further progress on nuclear disarmament.

In November 2015, Norway hosted the second plenary meeting of the International Partnership, where a decision was made to establish the following three separate working groups and their terms of reference:

- Working group on monitoring and verification objectives
- Working group on on-site inspections
- Working group on technical challenges and solutions.

While acknowledging that the wider aspects of the nuclear weapons cycle needed to be addressed, it was decided to start with a focus on warhead dismantlement.

Group of scientific experts in relation to the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty

From 1976 to 1996, the group of scientific experts under the Conference on Disarmament worked on the design, development and testing of a global monitoring system for verifying compliance with a possible future Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty. During these years, the group of scientific experts developed a culture of cooperation and trust among scientists that facilitated an understanding of technical issues, which in turn led to the group agreeing on the specifics of a monitoring system. The agreed design could then be readily used as a basis for parts of the verification protocol developed during the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty negotiations under the Conference on Disarmament from 1994 to 1996. Lessons learned from the group of scientific experts could be useful when assessing how to verify compliance with a possible future treaty or treaties on nuclear disarmament.

Capacity-building

In order to support the United Kingdom-Norway Initiative, relevant Norwegian institutions have been engaged in extensive cooperation on topics related to verification. The major contributors have been the Norwegian Radiation Protection Authority, the Norwegian Defence Research Establishment and the Institute for Energy Technology, the Norwegian Seismic Array, as well as the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs. This Norwegian network has also developed strong collaborative ties with partners in the United Kingdom, the United States, Sweden, and IAEA and research institutions such as the Nuclear Threat Initiative and the Verification Research, Training and Information Centre.

Within the International Partnership, Norway has been engaged in a producing a capacity-mapping document that outlines existing skills and areas of expertise applicable to key monitoring and verification activities, and identifies possible gaps.

There is a need for experts who are knowledgeable about the political dimensions of disarmament, non-proliferation and arms control, as well as about the many technical aspects of the complex process of dismantling nuclear weapons in a safe, secure and verifiable manner. This process may need to be carried out in steps, starting with the promotion of a verification culture in member States and building up networks. This will in turn facilitate efforts to develop concepts until requirements for verification have been refined to the extent that the work of training verification teams for a global nuclear verification regime can begin. Centres of excellence for both conceptual work and the training of inspectors could be considered.

The way ahead

A key motivation behind General Assembly resolution 71/67 is to secure broader support for nuclear disarmament in the United Nations, thus engaging more Member States. While this is clearly a long-term process, Norway expects the new group of governmental experts to draw on verification experience gained and lessons learned from past treaties. This includes United Nations monitoring and inspection arrangements and the work carried out by the United Kingdom-Norway Initiative, the Quad Nuclear Verification Partnership and the International Partnership. Capacity-building is another important area to explore further.

The group of governmental experts report should contain practical recommendations, which can subsequently be considered by the General Assembly or further addressed by the Conference on Disarmament or the Disarmament Commission, as stipulated in General Assembly resolution 71/67.

Pakistan

[Original: English]
[31 July 2017]

Pakistan is committed to the vision of a world free of nuclear weapons. This shared objective can best be realized through a universal, verifiable, non-discriminatory and comprehensive convention on nuclear weapons.

Verification would be an essential and extremely vital element for ensuring adherence to and compliance with any future agreement(s) on nuclear disarmament. Verification would be indispensable for building confidence among the parties concerned regarding the achievement and maintenance of a world without nuclear weapons. Nuclear disarmament verification would have to be undertaken by an independent and representative international treaty body, under adequate oversight

of the concerned States parties, in a transparent, non-discriminatory, objective and technically sound manner.

The final document of the tenth special session of the General Assembly provides an overarching framework to pursue disarmament measures in an equitable and balanced manner in order to ensure the right of each State to equal and undiminished security at the lowest possible level of armaments and military forces, ensuring that no individual State or group of States may obtain any advantage over others. It provides adequate guidance regarding provision of satisfactory measures of verification in negotiations of disarmament and arms limitation agreements in order to create the necessary confidence and ensure that they are being observed by all parties. In the final document of the tenth special session of the General Assembly it is also noted that the form and modalities of the verification to be provided for in any specific agreement depend upon and should be determined by, the purposes, scope and nature of the agreement. Agreements should provide for the participation of parties directly or through the United Nations system in the verification process. Where appropriate, a combination of several methods of verification as well as other compliance procedures should be employed.

The question of disarmament verification can be best addressed in the context of a specific treaty regime as opposed to in a generic and abstract manner. At the same time, maintaining an appropriate balance between the needs of verification on the one hand and legitimate national security concerns on the other would be essential.

The group of governmental experts mandated by General Assembly in its resolution 71/67 can contribute towards advancing understanding and addressing technical challenges of nuclear disarmament verification and monitoring, including tools, solutions and methods and capacity-building issues. Such efforts would provide Member States with a compendium or list of approaches and technical issues to be taken into consideration when discussing nuclear disarmament and arms control measures.

Paraguay

[Original: Spanish]
[31 July 2017]

Paraguay is concerned about actions aimed at improving the quality of nuclear weapons, through the development of a new generation of such weapons, and at modernizing existing nuclear arsenals in order to extend their lifespans, which could lead to a new arms race. The importance that nuclear weapons have been given in current military doctrine puts nuclear-weapon States and non-nuclear-weapon States alike at risk.

It is essential to move towards a world without nuclear weapons. The only truly effective and valid guarantee against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons is complete and verified nuclear disarmament. The Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons is the essential framework for making progress towards that objective, which can only be achieved through the implementation of practical measures under a strategy that will require political will on the part of nuclear-weapon States and good relations among those countries.

While no progress has been made with regard to the concrete steps towards nuclear disarmament agreed on at the 2010 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, the 2010 action plan remains valid and provides a starting point for achieving nuclear disarmament. Implementation of the action plan will be dependent on appropriate work being

done on the matter during the 2020 review cycle of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons.

The disarmament process must be transparent and irreversible, provide for effective verification mechanisms and be based on a universal, non-discriminatory and legally binding framework. Verification is necessary to improve confidence in and the transparency of the nuclear disarmament process. If information is not gathered through verification, countries will have to assess compliance individually. IAEA has extensive experience that could provide the basis for the establishment of a verification and compliance regime. To discourage any type of violation, the regime should be strict and effective and build trust. In that connection, Paraguay has promoted initiatives to foster trust among States during its term on the IAEA Board of Governors, from 2015 to 2017, in order to cultivate constructive foreign policy.

The promotion of nuclear-weapon-free zones is a practical and effective nuclear disarmament verification measure, as the establishment of such zones, while not an end in itself, is a very important intermediate step towards general and complete disarmament under effective international control. Another important measure is the enhancement of transparency as concerns nuclear arsenals. This includes the provision of information on the quantities and types of nuclear weapons, both deployed and non-deployed, and the budgets allocated to them.

Sweden

[Original: English]
[12 May 2017]

Verification: not a goal but a tool

Sweden supported General Assembly resolution 71/67 on nuclear disarmament verification. The nuclear-weapon States have, through article VI in the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, undertaken to accomplish the total elimination of their nuclear weapons. While verification is not a goal in itself, it is a tool to help build confidence and transparency in disarmament.

Sweden has a long history of working for international disarmament, and not least nuclear disarmament. Its goal is a world free of nuclear weapons. When advocating disarmament, we also stress the need for effective verification. Both political will and technical solutions are needed to take disarmament forward.

Principles of verification: irreversibility, transparency and verification

Verification is a necessary part of any disarmament agreement. The principles of irreversibility, transparency and verification should guide the work, as agreed in the 13 steps at the 2000 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and the 2010 action plan. Verification is needed along the way, in connection with every building block we put in place in disarmament and non-proliferation. It is also needed when we reach zero, to maintain a nuclear weapon-free world.

Building on previous experience: focusing on technical solutions

Verification regimes have often been developed as an integral part of arms control treaties, as part of the overall negotiations. A political agreement on the norm has often preceded the development of verification methods and tools, as being the case for the treaties on strategic arms reduction and the Treaty between

the United States of America and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics on the Elimination of Their Intermediate-Range and Shorter-Range Missiles.

There are, however, examples where the technical solutions have preceded and paved the way for a treaty. Technical solutions have in these instances helped to create confidence needed and helped parties to agree politically. The Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty is such an example. The group of scientific experts under the Conference on Disarmament was established under Swedish chairmanship in Geneva in 1982. For 14 years, the expert group elaborated on a comprehensive verification regime that would be capable of detecting all nuclear explosions and that would be able to enforce a total ban on nuclear explosions. The work of the group of scientific experts helped make the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty that was finally agreed upon in 1996, a reality. The experiences from the group of scientific experts can provide useful guidance when setting up working groups on any future verification regime on disarmament.

When conducting the work in the group of governmental experts it would be important to draw on lessons learned from previous verification experience as well as initiatives such as the United States-United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland technical cooperation for arms control and the United Kingdom-Norway Initiative. There has also been work done by civil society organizations such as the Nuclear Threat Initiative verification pilot project and the United Kingdom-based Verification Research, Training and Information Centre, in which Sweden has participated.

The group of governmental experts should build on, but not duplicate, what has been achieved within the International Partnership for Nuclear Disarmament Verification. The International Partnership has primarily focused on warhead dismantlement. Sweden is an active member of the International Partnership and co-chair of the working group on technical challenges and solutions. Nuclear warhead verification will require extensive collaboration, technology development and testing of different technologies. The working group has built a toolbox of technologies covering different methods, from radiation measurements on fissile material and surrounding high explosives, to chain of custody technologies and change detections.

Sweden is also engaged in a multi-year arms control simulation initiative together with the United States, the United Kingdom and Norway called the Quad Nuclear Verification Partnership. The aim is to provide the international community with capacity-building, a testbed for exercising and evaluating monitoring technologies and a model verification protocol.

In order to complement previous initiatives, it could, for example, be useful if the group of governmental experts were to assess how verification approaches change when going from high numbers of nuclear weapons to low numbers and to eventually reach and maintain a world free of nuclear weapons. For example, the verification intrusiveness and timeliness could be two aspects affected. In addition, the technical solutions would presumably depend on whether the verification is concerned with verifying a reduction of nuclear weapons, a limitation on the total numbers, or verifying that there is no ongoing development or production of nuclear weapons.

Nuclear-weapon States and non-nuclear-weapon States working together

While the nuclear-weapon States bear the responsibility in reducing and eventually eliminating their nuclear arsenals, non-nuclear-weapon States also have a role to play in international verification processes to ensure credibility and to ensure that all States and their citizens have confidence in the process.

As an illustration, it has been key for the credibility of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) that its inspectors come from different corners of the world and routinely perform verification at nuclear sites in member States. The verification system of IAEA has also been provided with a broader mandate by the introduction of the additional protocol. It is essential for the credibility of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization that non-nuclear-weapon States contribute with monitoring technologies and techniques. Sweden, for example, has developed the noble gas detection system SAUNA, which is crucial for detecting radioactivity emanating from underground nuclear explosions.

Switzerland

[Original: English]
[18 May 2017]

Switzerland was one of the lead sponsors of General Assembly resolution 71/67 because it has long supported verifiability, irreversibility and transparency, as core principles of nuclear disarmament and because it considers nuclear disarmament verification as essential in view of the credible reduction or elimination of nuclear weapons. Switzerland wishes to underline that, pending additional agreements mandating the verifiable destruction and elimination of nuclear warheads and arsenals, and irrespective of different views on how nuclear disarmament can be achieved, nuclear disarmament verification instruments, techniques and methods should be advanced systematically.

States possessing nuclear weapons bear a special responsibility to verifiably reduce and ultimately eliminate their arsenals. However, all States share the responsibility to achieve and maintain a world without nuclear weapons. This will, inter alia, require one or more multilateral agreements, backed by a strong, multilateral system of verification. Accordingly, non-nuclear-weapon States, in cooperation with nuclear-weapon States, have a role to play in the identification and development of credible, practical and effective multilateral nuclear disarmament verification measures.

While nuclear and non-nuclear verification measures have already been developed and are globally implemented on a daily basis, additional efforts must be made to develop the set of measures needed to verify. Such nuclear disarmament verification measures must allow the parties to the relevant agreement(s) to gain reassurance of compliance by other parties with their commitments and hence increase mutual trust and confidence.

Developing and agreeing on credible, efficient and at the same time cost-effective multilateral nuclear disarmament verification measures is likely to be technically complex and militarily and politically sensitive. In this regard, States could benefit from the relevant experience by the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization, the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons, the International Atomic Energy Agency or the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, and from work done by States (such as the United States of America and the Russian Federation or the Quad Nuclear Verification Partnership), civil society and academic and other specialist institutions. Experiences gained in the International Partnership on Nuclear Disarmament Verification are highly relevant.

Switzerland is convinced that the group of governmental experts on nuclear disarmament verification can make an important contribution to advancing nuclear disarmament in general and multilateral nuclear disarmament verification in particular. In this regard, the group of governmental experts should serve to anchor

existing expertise on nuclear disarmament verification (whether resulting from ongoing treaty implementation or from broader partnerships such as the International Partnership on Nuclear Disarmament Verification) in the United Nations system, without duplicating existing efforts. The group of governmental experts should identify nuclear disarmament verification challenges, and how to overcome them, and identify the levels of information required to ensure the credibility of multilateral verification. Finally, the group of governmental experts should make practical recommendations for follow-up work, within the General Assembly, the Conference on Disarmament, the Disarmament Commission or by the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research or any other appropriate forum.

Ukraine

[Original: English]
[12 May 2017]

Ukraine fully supports efforts by the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) aimed at strengthening effectiveness and improving efficiency of its safeguards system, which is one of the main elements of nuclear disarmament verification. It welcomes the progress made in the area of conceptualization and development of safeguards implementation at the State level.

In this regard, Ukraine has been diligently implementing full-scope safeguards since 1995 in accordance with the agreement between Ukraine and IAEA for the application of safeguards in connection with the 1995 Review and Extension Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and the additional protocol thereto of 2000. The State System of Accounting for and Control of Nuclear Material in Ukraine has been established in order to control all nuclear material and implement nuclear safeguards. Its effectiveness and the strong commitment by Ukraine to safeguards implementation were reflected in the broad conclusion drawn for Ukraine by IAEA and reaffirmed in 2010.

Ukraine believes that the advancement of the nuclear disarmament verification to a great extent depends on the progress achieved in entering into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty and conclusion of the treaty banning the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices.

United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland

[Original: English]
[27 July 2017]

The United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland was pleased to co-sponsor General Assembly resolution 71/67 on nuclear disarmament verification and welcomes the opportunity to respond.

The United Kingdom recognizes the importance of developing and strengthening practical and effective nuclear disarmament verification measures. Achieving a world without nuclear weapons will not be possible without effective verification. States will require a high level of assurance of the compliance of others to reduce and eliminate nuclear weapons. Verification is the established way States can gain such assurance. To gain maximum confidence from verification it is important that States understand the measures being implemented. Involving both nuclear and non-nuclear-weapon States in developing verification measures will help to ensure that all States have confidence that obligations under future disarmament treaties are being met.

It will take time and effort to reach a world without nuclear weapons. Robust and effective technical verification measures will need to be ready to be applied when such time comes. In this way, negotiators of future disarmament treaties will have the required verification options available, to ensure such treaties create the confidence required to progress disarmament. To enable this to be possible in the future, verification measures should be developed now. While verification is not an aim in itself, work on developing and strengthening verification measures will be a necessary part of ensuring a world without nuclear weapons is achievable.

Furthermore, effective verification measures will be required to maintain a world without nuclear weapons. When such time comes, former possessor States will likely still have significant infrastructure and capabilities associated with their former programmes, and ensuring such facilities and capabilities are re-purposed or eliminated will take time. The assurance that verification can provide will be vital in establishing confidence that all States are maintaining their obligations under future disarmament agreements. Further thought will also be required to understand if current safeguards measures will be practicable or sufficient, when applied in the long term to all States, to provide the confidence required in maintaining a world without nuclear weapons. Without such verification States will not be able to be fully assured of their security and the pressure to proliferate and develop nuclear weapons again may be present.

Efforts taken at the national level to develop practical and effective nuclear disarmament verification measures

The United Kingdom has undertaken substantial work to date on developing practical and effective nuclear disarmament verification measures. It has developed a national programme on such verification measures at its Atomic Weapons Establishment following the Strategic Defence Review in 1998. Under the programme a series of exercises has been carried out, including in collaboration with partners in the United States of America and Norway, to establish how the dismantlement of nuclear warheads can be verified. This represents one of the most crucial and difficult aspects of nuclear disarmament verification: how to allow foreign inspectors, including those from non-nuclear weapon States, to undertake activities within nuclear weapons facilities, whilst maintaining safety, security and within the obligations of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons.

The United Kingdom has identified the following key tasks which need to be achieved while protecting safety, security and proliferation sensitive information.

(a) How to ensure appropriate access to foreign inspectors and equipment into nuclear weapons facilities;

(b) How such inspectors can gain confidence an item presented is a nuclear weapon;

(c) How inspectors can maintain a chain of custody of a nuclear weapon through the dismantlement process.

The United Kingdom has investigated a range of technical solutions to these key challenges, including in collaboration with its partners. While significant progress has been made, many aspects still remain unresolved. Further additional challenges have yet to be addressed, including around the correctness and completeness of any declarations on nuclear weapons, and on verification measures which may be needed to maintain a world free of nuclear weapons.

By working with Norway, a non-nuclear-weapon State, the United Kingdom has been able to identify the skills and expertise required to enable successful work on verification. Most States possess individuals with the skills required to work on

verification, including those familiar with other verification regimes (i.e., International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW), Conventional Armed Forces in Europe), internal regulation and compliance, nuclear safety and security, explosive safety, military site security, scientists and engineers and many other relevant skills. To develop chain of custody techniques and technologies which can be used in sensitive facilities under nuclear and explosive regulation is therefore possible in most States. The United Kingdom remains convinced of the important role of non-nuclear-weapon States in disarmament verification.

Most recently, the United Kingdom has been taking leading roles in both the International Partnership for Nuclear Disarmament Verification and the Quad Nuclear Verification Partnership between the United Kingdom, the United, Norway and Sweden. These two initiatives build on previous work and are developing multilateral approaches. These initiatives widen the field of expertise, allowing a much wider range of issues to be discussed and verification solutions to be found. However, further initiatives and the deeper involvement of more States will benefit the development of the full range of verification solutions needed.

Possible activities to be undertaken by the group of governmental experts

The United Kingdom welcomes the opportunity to discuss the importance of developing and strengthening practical and effective nuclear disarmament verification measures in achieving and maintaining a world without nuclear weapons.

The United Kingdom believes that among the activities and deliverables that the group of governmental experts can reasonably achieve in the timescale set for its deliberations, it should:

(a) Identify the verification challenges associated with achieving and with maintaining a world without nuclear weapons;

(b) Review the verification work undertaken to date;

(c) Identify key lessons learned and unresolved issues;

(d) Identify and report on how such issues could be addressed;

(e) Consider how to encourage more States to undertake efforts in developing and strengthening nuclear disarmament verification measures.

The previous work the group may wish to look at should include, but not be limited to, work undertaken between the United States and Russia for the treaties on strategic arms reduction; the trilateral initiative between Russia, the United States and IAEA; the United Kingdom-United States verification programme; the United Kingdom-Norway Initiative; the Quad Nuclear Verification Partnership and the International Partnership for Nuclear Disarmament Verification. Further, taking lessons from existing treaties and the institutions which implement their verification regimes will be essential. This should include IAEA and OPCW as the most relevant but could include many others. However, all verification regimes are different due to the unique challenges associated with each one. Other work has been published by non-governmental organizations and the United States national laboratories and this may provide valuable insights for the group.

In identifying key lessons learned and unresolved issues, the group should consider both the technologies and inspection techniques required to achieve verification, but also the methodologies used to investigate and develop them. This should include consideration of how to engage and build the confidence of States in verification, and how all States can utilize the resources they have to develop verification solutions for the future.

Identifying the future challenges for effective verification should be the key task of the group. Reporting back to the Secretary-General on what these issues are and the way in which they may be resolved in the future should be the group's aim. Given the breadth of work required, encouraging more States to become involved in developing nuclear disarmament verification measures will be important.

United States of America

[Original: English]
[27 July 2017]

A complex undertaking

The earliest bilateral United States of America-Soviet arms control treaties limiting the growth of nuclear arsenals did not provide for any on-site inspection, although there was a requirement not to interfere with monitoring by national technical means. But with the entry into force of the Treaty between the United States of America and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics on the Elimination of Their Intermediate-Range and Shorter-Range, the United States and the Soviet Union required unprecedented access to each other's most sensitive forces and facilities in order to verify compliance by each side.

Even today, under the New Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty, just 14 lines of text in the Treaty are devoted to the central limits. What provides the parties with confidence, predictability and stability are the processes and procedures that make up the more than 350 other pages of the Treaty. If the number of nuclear weapons decreases below the current global inventory, future arms control treaties and agreements will need to provide for new and even more intrusive inspection provisions, including access to new types of facilities and new items subject to inspection, such as the nuclear warheads themselves.

The key factor to enable the negotiation of further reductions in nuclear weapons is the global security situation. In the near term that security situation does not seem likely to enable such reductions. However, this does not mean that we should put thoughts of reductions and verification out of our mind. On the contrary now is the time, without the pressure of a negotiation, to contemplate what verification objectives and measures would be necessary to have confidence in the further reduction of global nuclear stockpiles. Now is the time to bring together experts from both nuclear possessor and non-possessor States, to build capacity and identify the challenges associated with verifying compliance with future commitments to nuclear weapon reductions. Now is the time to think through the complex solutions required to address those challenges, and begin the hard work of developing procedures and technologies that can implement those solutions.

Challenges of verification

Over the past decade, a number of important efforts have attempted to address the challenges of nuclear disarmament verification. The United States and the United Kingdom; the United Kingdom and Norway; and the International Partnership for Nuclear Disarmament Verification, among others, have all approached the issue of verification from different angles. These efforts have collectively identified some key truths:

- Nuclear disarmament verification is complex work often requiring the involvement of people who often times cannot be allowed to see nuclear weapons and components directly.

- Collaborative work between nuclear-weapon and non-nuclear-weapon States is important to developing verification capacity and buy-in of States to verification methods.
- Exercises and practical demonstrations of technology aid in the development of that buy-in and advance the state of play.
- It takes engagement by governments to address and solve the verification challenges.

The group of government experts established by General Assembly resolution 71/67 offers a forum for experts in the field of nuclear disarmament verification to incorporate these truths into a comprehensive framework that can guide future efforts like those cited above. It is easy for excitement to drive redundancy as competing groups of States, or even non-governmental organizations rush to establish additional groups to "solve" the problems of verification. Too many competing efforts stretch the pool of experts thin, and dilute the work and energy that can be focused on those efforts already under way.

In this context, it is important that the group of governmental experts on verification identify ongoing efforts in the field of nuclear disarmament verification research, and catalogue the issues on which these groups are focused. In addition, and more importantly, the group of governmental experts can identify the gaps in verification research that are not yet being addressed. Such a gap analysis can serve as a guidepost for efficiently addressing outstanding needs and identifying areas for future research efforts.

The importance of verification in future nuclear disarmament efforts is paramount. The collective capacity of nations to address verification issues is increasing and will continue to increase through cooperative efforts like the International Partnership. The group of governmental experts on verification can play an important role in harnessing this ever-increasing capacity to push the boundaries of the state-of-the-art in advance of a day when the security situation improves enough to enable commitments to further reductions in nuclear weapons.

III. Reply received from the European Union

[Original: English]
[17 July 2017]

The European Union and its member States remain committed to the pursuit of nuclear disarmament, in accordance with article VI of the Treaty and stress the need for concrete progress towards the full implementation of article VI of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, especially through an overall reduction in the global stockpile of nuclear weapons, taking into account the special responsibility of States that possess the largest nuclear arsenals.[2]

The European Union supports the strengthening of the effectiveness and efficiency of the International Atomic Energy Agency safeguards system that plays an indispensable role in the implementation of the non-proliferation obligations under the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. Comprehensive safeguards agreements, together with the additional protocol, constitute the current

[2] European Union statement on Cluster I issues, 2017 Preparatory Committee for the 2020 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, para. 5, available from http://statements.unmeetings.org/media2/14684386/eu-new-statement-cluster-i.pdf.

verification standard.[3] The close cooperation between the European Atomic Energy Community and the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) allows for effective and efficient safeguards. The European Union actively supports the safeguards system of IAEA through the European Commission Safeguards Support Programme and the support programmes of some of its member States.

The entry into force and universalization of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty and the verification capabilities of the International Monitoring System are of crucial importance and remain top priorities for the European Union. The European Union will continue providing both diplomatic and financial support for the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty and its Monitoring System in the future.

Through its continued financial support to the G7 Global Partnership against the Spread of Weapons and Materials of Mass Destruction and to the International Science and Technology Centre, the European Union has significantly contributed to international efforts to destroy and eliminate stockpiles of weapons of mass destruction and fissile material, and to redirect scientific and technical expertise for peaceful purposes.[4]

It is of utmost importance that all parties contribute to improving the strategic context for arms control and disarmament. The European Union continues to contribute actively to global efforts to seek a safer world for all and to create the conditions for a world without nuclear weapons, in accordance with the goals of the Non-Proliferation Treaty, in a way that promotes international stability, and based on the principle of undiminished security for all.[5]

The European Union supports the creation of broader partnerships and cooperative verification arrangements and, since its inauguration in 2015 participates, in the work of the International Partnership for Nuclear Disarmament Verification, to enable active collaboration between States with and without nuclear weapons, in conformity with their international obligations, in developing practical methods that could contribute to the verification of irreversible dismantlement of nuclear weapons.[6]

The European Union remains united and committed to treaty-based nuclear disarmament and arms control. The Conference on Disarmament has the crucial role to negotiate multilateral disarmament treaties according to its mandate. The European Union also recognizes the important role that the United Nations Disarmament Commission plays as a deliberative body of the General Assembly on disarmament matters.

The European Union and its member States supported the 2016 General Assembly resolution on nuclear disarmament verification and welcomed the establishment of the group of governmental experts to consider the role of verification in advancing nuclear disarmament. While verification is not an aim in itself, further development of the multilateral nuclear verification capabilities will be required for the achievement and maintenance of a world without nuclear weapons.[7]

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[3] European Union general statement, 2017 NPT Preparatory Committee, available from https://eeas.europa.eu/headquarters/headquarters-homepage/25740/preparatory-committee-2020-npt-review-conference-parties-treaty-non-proliferation-nuclear_en.

[4] European Union statement on Cluster I issues, 2017 Preparatory Committee for the 2020 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, para 10, available from http://statements.unmeetings.org/media2/14684386/eu-new-statement-cluster-i.pdf.

[5] Ibid., para. 3.

[6] See General Assembly resolution 71/67, p. 14.

[7] European Union statement on Cluster I issues, 2017 Preparatory Committee for the 2020 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, para 11, available from http://statements.unmeetings.org/media2/14684386/eu-new-statement-cluster-i.pdf.

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General and complete disarmament

Confidence-building measures in the regional and subregional context

Report of the Secretary-General

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I. Introduction

1. In its resolution 71/39, the General Assembly reaffirmed the ways and means regarding confidence- and security-building measures set out in the report of the Disarmament Commission on its 1993 session (A/48/42), and it called upon Member States to pursue these ways and means through sustained consultations and dialogue, while at the same time avoiding actions that might hinder or impair such a dialogue. Furthermore, the Assembly urged States to comply strictly with all bilateral, regional and international agreements, including arms control and disarmament agreements, to which they were a party. The Assembly also emphasized that the objective of confidence-building measures should be to help to strengthen international peace and security and to be consistent with the principle of undiminished security at the lowest level of armaments, and encouraged the promotion of bilateral and regional confidence-building measures, with the consent and participation of the parties concerned, to avoid conflict and prevent the unintended and accidental outbreak of hostilities. It requested the Secretary-General to submit a report to the Assembly at its seventy-second session containing the views of Member States on confidence-building measures in the regional and subregional context. The present report is submitted pursuant to that request and on the basis of information received from Member States.

2. A note verbale was sent to Member States on 2 March 2017, requesting their views, followed by a note verbale dated 12 June 2017. At the time of reporting, replies from the Governments of Colombia, Cuba, Ecuador, Georgia, Jordan, Lebanon, Madagascar, Spain and Ukraine, as well as from the European Union, had been received and these are reproduced in sections II and III below. Additional replies received after 31 July 2017 will be posted on the website of the Office for Disarmament Affairs[1] in the language of submission only.

II. Replies received from Member States

Colombia

[Original: Spanish]
[30 May 2017]

Colombia is of the view that regional and subregional instruments that promote confidence-building measures encourage transparency, lead to better relations among States and contribute to the prevention of conflict. While a number of these instruments require voluntary reports, Colombia supports all means of building confidence among States, in particular initiatives designed to foster the responsible exchange of information relating to arms transfers.

With regard to global transparency, the importance and relevance of the Register of Conventional Arms should be underscored, given that, if all countries report their acquisitions, there is a lower risk of a potential destabilization of the balance of power as a result of the accumulation of arms. Colombia reported to the Register in 1993, 2008, 2010, 2011, 2012 and 2013 (the last two reports were sent by the Ministry of National Defence on 4 May 2015). Moreover, together with Chile, Colombia was one of the two Latin American countries that participated in the most recent meeting of the Group of Governmental Experts on the continuing operation and further development of the Register.

[1] www.un.org/disarmament/.

In terms of military spending, one particularly noteworthy confidence-building instrument is the United Nations Report on Military Expenditures, which is aimed at achieving real reductions in military expenditures. Our country has submitted reports through that mechanism every year from 2007 to 2013 and is already in the process of preparing its report for this year.

At the regional level, Colombia participates in the Conference of Defence Ministers of the Americas and in monitoring the implementation of confidence- and security-building measures, with a view to promoting reciprocal knowledge and the exchange of ideas at the ministerial level in the area of defence and hemispheric security.

Also worthy of mention, at the subregional level, is the experience of the South American Defence Council in the background, development of methodology and tools (manuals and electronic templates) for reporting in the following instruments: implementation procedures for confidence- and security-building measures, the South American defence expenditure registry and the South American military inventory.

Another important measure is the establishment of forums at the regional and subregional levels for the evaluation and analysis of global and hemispheric measures related to confidence-building. The exchange of best practices for the purpose of reducing crime and various threats that affect integrity and security is also essential.

Cuba

[Original: Spanish]
[28 March 2017]

Confidence-building measures must enhance understanding, transparency and cooperation among States. If used appropriately, such measures can contribute to maintaining international peace and security. They should therefore be preserved, expanded and improved in order to prevent and avoid international conflicts. Appropriate implementation of confidence-building measures at the regional and subregional levels can help to prevent the outbreak of armed conflict and promote regional stability.

The guidelines for confidence-building measures adopted by consensus in 1988 by the Disarmament Commission of the General Assembly state that confidence-building is "a step-by-step process of taking all concrete and effective measures which express political commitments and are of military significance and which are designed to make progress in strengthening confidence and security to lessen tension and assist in arms limitation and disarmament".

Observance of the norms and principles of international law and the Charter of the United Nations, peaceful settlement of disputes, respect for the sovereignty of States and non-intervention in their internal affairs, rejection of the threat or use of force, cooperation among States, and adherence in good faith to the provisions of international law are all indispensable elements for effective confidence-building. It is of paramount importance that confidence-building be undertaken with the consent and participation of all parties concerned. Because they are voluntary in nature, confidence-building measures cannot be imposed. In order to be effective, such measures must take into account the interests, needs and specific characteristics of each country, region or subregion.

The Latin American and Caribbean region has contributed to the establishment of a favourable environment for the development of confidence-building measures

in the region, and, along with extra-regional actors, to the declaration of the region as a zone of peace at the second Summit of the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States, held in Havana, Cuba. That proclamation represents the region's commitment to preventing war and resolving regional conflicts by peaceful means.

Ecuador

[Original: Spanish]
[28 July 2017]

Ecuador considers that improvements in regional and subregional integration provide the appropriate framework for the implementation of confidence-building measures. In Latin America and the Caribbean, such integration has been achieved through the establishment of the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (CELAC) and the declaration of the region as a zone of peace by the Heads of State and Government of CELAC.

In the context of the Union of South American Nations, the South American Defence Council has achieved significant progress in a number of areas, with the aim of making South America a zone of peace and cooperation. To that end, in the Declaration of Paramaribo of 30 August 2013, the Heads of State of the region noted that the Council was the ideal space for moving forward in the development of strategic thinking.

At present, the Council is developing a shared vision on regional defence, based on such aspects as the protection of strategic natural resources, cyberdefence and cooperation in the defence industry and in capacity-building and training, in particular with the establishment of the South American Defence College.

Under its action plan for 2017, the Council aims to continue its work on matters related to, inter alia, defence policies, including the gender perspective; military cooperation, humanitarian actions and peace operations, including demining experiences; the defence industry and technology; and education and training, including on topics related to the environment and biodiversity, as well as international humanitarian law and human rights law.

Confidence-building measures at the regional and subregional levels have, in the view of Ecuador, been essential in building a defence system geared to face new challenges and combat common threats through the implementation of regional instruments in the service of peace and regional stability. They have also served to strengthen cooperative efforts in areas of common concern — such as the mapping of natural disaster risks and the conduct of peacekeeping exercises — that will benefit the peoples of our region.

Georgia

[Original: English]
[9 May 2017]

Georgia attaches great importance to confidence-building measures, which play a significant role in supporting actions taken against the proliferation of weapons and in reducing tensions between States. Such measures foster transparency, dialogue and cooperation, thereby creating a climate conducive to effective disarmament and arms control.

With regard to confidence- and security-building measures taken at the regional level, Georgia is a participating State of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), including its Forum for Security Cooperation,

established in 1992. Georgia is also a party to the Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe and the Treaty on Open Skies and it has adopted the Vienna Document 2011 on Confidence- and Security-Building Measures. With regard to confidence-building measures and related activities, Georgia participates in the exchange of information through the OSCE Code of Conduct on Politico-Military Aspects of Security, Global Exchange of Military Information, questionnaire on anti-personnel landmines, Document on Small Arms and Light Weapons, Document on Stockpiles of Conventional Ammunition and documents on conventional arms transfers.

With regard to confidence- and security-building measures taken at the subregional level, Georgia is a participating State of the Document on Confidence- and Security-Building Measures in the Naval Field in the Black Sea.

The existing regimes related to confidence- and security-building measures currently consist of interlocking exchanges of mandatory and verifiable notifications on military holdings and activities and armed force levels. The regimes contribute to greater transparency, thus promoting trust and confidence among participating States. Georgia has fully implemented a great number of OSCE codes of conduct and principles and adheres to the various regimes of information exchange.

Jordan

[Original: Arabic]
[19 May 2017]

The Government of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan supports United Nations efforts to promote confidence-building measures at the regional and subregional levels in order to establish peace and security throughout the world. Jordan has consistently supported General Assembly resolutions aimed at establishing peace, resolving conflicts through peaceful means, promoting confidence-building and transparency measures at all levels and at supporting disarmament and arms control, in order to foster trust among the States of the region and thereby defuse potential armed conflicts. Jordan encourages the resolution of armed conflicts through negotiation, arbitration and legal settlement, by resorting to regional agencies or arrangements, or by other peaceful means chosen by the parties.

The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan complies with all Security Council resolutions on weapons of mass destruction, disarmament, non-proliferation and the use of force against civilians, particularly those resolutions concerning the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, such as Security Council resolution 1540 (2004), which provides the basis for curbing the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction at the regional and international levels. Jordan also urges States to comply with United Nations resolutions and bilateral, regional and international instruments.

Jordan complies with measures aimed at controlling conventional weapons and weapons of mass destruction. This course of action has directly affected the country's security policy at the regional and subregional levels. Jordan is party to a number of international instruments and participates in a number of initiatives concerning conventional weapons, weapons of mass destruction, non-proliferation and counter-terrorism, and participates in international efforts to prohibit the trade in small and light weapons, with a view to building confidence, promoting cooperation and establishing peace and security in the region and around the world. Following are some of those instruments and initiatives:

- The Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons
- The Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty
- The Convention on Prohibitions or Restrictions on the Use of Certain Conventional Weapons Which May Be Deemed to Be Excessively Injurious or to Have Indiscriminate Effects
- The Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on Their Destruction
- The Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons and on Their Destruction
- The Global Initiative to Combat Nuclear Terrorism
- The Proliferation Security Initiative

Jordan understands that terrorism is one of the most significant threats to global peace and security. The Government believes in the importance of combating all forms of terrorism and stresses that terrorism has no religion. Terrorism poses a major challenge for the defence policy of Jordan and has the potential to undermine national security. In keeping with its political positions, which are characterized by tolerance, prudence, reason and foresight, the country has endeavoured to counter terrorism by enacting laws at the national level, acceding to all international counter-terrorism instruments and supporting all international counter-terrorism initiatives.

Jordan has concluded military agreements aimed at establishing regional peace and security with many countries in the region and beyond, such as the United States of America, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization and the European Union. The Government of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan provides its armed forces with adequate equipment and military weapons for protecting its territory and safeguarding its basic security interests, and not for the purpose of attacking other States. Furthermore, the Jordanian armed forces participate in United Nations peacekeeping operations throughout the world, in order to foster security, peace and stability in various conflict areas. Jordan is one of the most significant contributors to United Nations peacekeeping operations.

At the regional level, Jordan has collaborated closely with neighbouring States, on a basis of cooperation and shared interests, to establish peace and security in the Middle East. Jordan concluded a peace treaty with the State of Israel in 1994, and, since then, the Government has continued to be a regional pioneer, acceding to international treaties and instruments on arms control and non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction in order to establish a zone free of weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East. In 1998, Jordan signed the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and on Their Destruction and subsequently removed all mines along the border between Jordan and Israel. It also created the National Committee for Demining and Rehabilitation (http://ncdr.org.jo/) in order to follow up on that process and to ensure that Jordan was cleared of all mines and explosives that could kill civilians by 2012, as well as to provide assistance to anyone injured by landmines.

On the humanitarian front, Jordan has always been among the first in the region to take the initiative in alleviating human suffering at the regional and international levels. It has hosted many refugees and displaced persons from various countries and has recently welcomed some 1.4 million Syrian refugees, providing

them with health care and social services despite the country's precarious economic situation. Jordan believes that it is important for States to work together to alleviate human suffering. The army continues to provide free medical care, dispatch medical teams, and establish various field hospitals under the auspices of the United Nations. It currently provides those services in Iraqi Kurdistan and the Gaza Strip.

Jordan calls on Member States and the international community to enhance the effectiveness of United Nations peacekeeping and security efforts by providing the Organization with the tools it needs to prevent conflict and foster trust among States at all levels.

Lebanon

[Original: Arabic]
[6 April 2017]

Lebanon supports all international initiatives and instruments aimed at building confidence. It also supports the maintenance of military balance and efforts to combat the uncontrolled proliferation of various types of weapons in the region and globally, because of the serious global, regional and subregional threats they pose. Lebanon also reaffirms that it complies with international law and the principles set out in the Charter of the United Nations, particularly the principles of the sovereign equality and territorial integrity of States. Israel presents the main obstacle to confidence-building for Lebanon at the regional and subregional levels, as it continues to violate international laws and norms and possesses weapons of mass destruction, which constitute an ever-present threat at the local and regional levels.

Madagascar

[Original: French]
[20 June 2017]

The United Nations recalls that:

- Member States should respect agreements already reached at the regional level and avoid any action that might hinder their implementation. The Organization encourages dialogue and promotes bilateral and regional confidence-building measures aimed at preventing conflict.
- Member States should resolve their disputes by peaceful means in order to maintain international peace and security and to support the efforts of the international community to promote arms control and disarmament.

In Madagascar, interventions related to the settlement of disputes at the regional or subregional level fall within the purview of specialized entities, such as the battalion established under the Renforcement des Capacités Africaines de Maintien de la Paix (RECAMP) programme. This battalion is capable of providing support for the implementation of necessary measures in this type of situation.

Spain

[Original: Spanish]
[18 May 2017]

The ultimate goal of a regime for arms control or of confidence- and security-building measures should be conflict prevention by reducing the danger of misperceptions or miscalculations with regard to the military activities of other

States; by implementing measures to make covert military preparations more difficult; and by reducing the risk of surprise attacks or the accidental eruption of hostilities.

From that perspective, confidence- and security-building measures within a regional or subregional context are of great value as a form of prevention specifically adapted to that context, given that they involve a smaller number of participants and can therefore be more stringent and thus more effective. All of the foregoing makes such measures easier to adopt and implement.

Within its own regional sphere, Spain has actively participated in all relevant initiatives; it is a party to the Treaty on Open Skies and the Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe, which include a set of legally binding measures and, as a member of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), it is politically bound through the measures contained in the Vienna Document on Confidence- and Security-Building Measures (which was updated in 2011 with the aim of improving and broadening its implementation), as well as by other OSCE documents. Moreover, Spain has contributed to the implementation of the regional stabilization agreements established by annex 1-B to the Dayton Agreement for the former Yugoslavia.

A fundamental and key element for the performance of verification activities in connection with disarmament and Spain's security- and confidence-building measures abroad is the Spanish Verification Unit, a defence agency established in 1991 and responsible for the detailed planning and performance of said activities.

Spain is also participating in the structured dialogue on current and future challenges and risks hosted by OSCE, which represents the first step towards relaunching discussions on arms control and confidence- and security-building measures in Europe.

Ukraine

[Original: English]
[27 April 2017]

Ukraine's consistent commitment to enhancing transparency and predictability in the military field, including through effective confidence-building measures, remains unchanged. Moreover, this commitment has been reinforced by the ongoing Russian aggression against Ukraine.

Ukraine continues to support all confidence-building measures taken at the regional level, including those of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), and at the subregional and bilateral levels. It has been actively participating in the revision of the OSCE Vienna Document on Confidence- and Security-Building Measures and advocates expanding the scope of application of these measures. As a victim of Russia's hybrid war, Ukraine also favours tightening the intrusiveness of the measures, including through lowering the thresholds for the notification and observation of military exercises, which can be used as a means of intimidation and preparation for direct military aggression, especially against neighbouring States. Ukraine further favours an increase in the number of inspections and the size of inspection teams, the strengthening of risk-reduction mechanisms, including through the use of fact-finding missions, and a constant assessment of the efficiency of confidence-building measures instruments, including from the perspective of their applicability, usefulness and viability during an armed conflict, in order to preclude a repeat of Ukraine's tragic case anywhere else.

Ukraine attaches great importance to bilateral confidence-building measures with neighbouring countries in border areas. To date, Ukraine has entered into relevant bilateral agreements with the Republic of Poland, Hungary, the Slovak Republic, the Republic of Belarus and Romania. Conducting inspections on a parity basis pursuant to those agreements has confirmed their practical usefulness in maintaining and deepening trust, friendly relations and politico-military cooperation among the countries concerned, thereby enhancing and complementing the European confidence- and security-building process.

Noteworthy features of these bilateral regimes, which could be borrowed by others to design or improve confidence-building measures, are: the observation of military activities starting from the tactical level; the prohibition of military exercises at the battalion level and above, at a distance of 10-20 km from a border; the application of such measures near the border to activities of not only the armed forces, but also other forces; the possibility of extending inspections for an additional period of time and their expansion to battalion-level units.

Regrettably, the numerous proposals that Ukraine made to enter into a similar agreement with Russia were rejected by the Russian side. In addition, the Russian Federation has put into an ongoing state of impasse such subregional military cooperation and confidence-building arrangements of the Black Sea littoral States as the confidence- and security-building measures in the naval field in the Black Sea initiated by Ukraine.

Notwithstanding the deteriorated security situation in the OSCE region caused by the current Kremlin leadership's behaviour, Ukraine believes that the experience gained in the development of confidence-building measures in the OSCE region deserves appropriate attention and, therefore, that the Vienna Document, which has generated a great deal of experience in the field of confidence-building, can serve as a viable example for similar arrangements in other regions of the world.

III. Reply received from the European Union

[Original: English]
[5 July 2017]

The European Union strongly supports the establishment of confidence- and security-building measures as an important tool to overcome mistrust, enhance transparency and maintain peace and security at the regional and subregional levels.

Confidence-building measures constitute an important factor in preventing conflict and enhance overall political stability and the overall security environment, especially in situations of armed conflict and in areas of tension.

European countries have greatly benefited from the confidence-building measures that have been introduced in Europe, in particular by the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) and through provisions of the Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe, the Treaty on Open Skies and the OSCE Vienna Document regime, Document on Small Arms and Light Weapons and Document on Stockpiles of Conventional Ammunition, among others.

The European Union will therefore continue to support and promote confidence-building measures both at the regional and subregional levels, as well as in other parts of the world, and especially in areas of tension, taking into account the specific characteristics of each region.